00046514

NOT TO BE ISSUED
OUT OF THE LIBRARY.

THE
ASIATIC SOCIETY OF BOMBAY
Town Hall, Bombay.

Digitized with financial assistance from the
Government of Maharashtra
on 15 June, 2016

THE

WORKS

OF

JAMES THOMSON.

WITH HIS LAST

CORRECTIONS and IMPROVEMENTS.

46514

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

VOLUME IV.

LL 6 11

LONDON:

Printed for *John Donaldson*, corner of Arundel Street, No 195 in the Strand. Sold by *T. Wilson*, at York, *A. Smith*, Halifax; *D. Akenhead*, Newcastle; *W. Boyd*, Dumfries; *W. Darling*, Edinburgh; *L. [illegible]*, Dublin; and *W. Anderson*, Stirling.

M.DCC.L[illegible]

00046514

EDWARD and ELEONORA.

A TRAGEDY.

TO HER

ROYAL HIGHNESS

THE

PRINCESS OF WALES.

MADAM,

IF I take the liberty, once more, to crave the protection of your ROYAL HIGHNESS, for another tragedy of my writing, it is becauſe I am led, almoſt unavoidably, to it by my ſubject. In the character of ELEONORA I have endeavoured to repreſent, however faintly, a PRINCESS diſtinguiſhed for all the virtues that render greatneſs amiable. I have aimed, particularly,

to do juſtice to her inviolable affection and generous tenderneſs for a PRINCE who was the darling of a great and free people.

Their deſcendents, even now, will own, with pleaſure, how properly this addreſs is made to your ROYAL HIGHNESS. I am with the profoundeſt reſpect,

MADAM,

Your ROYAL HIGHNESS's

Moſt humble and

Moſt devoted Servant,

JAMES THOMSON.

TATIONS OF THE BOMBAY BRANCH OF THE ASIATIC SO

PROLOGUE.

By a FRIEND.

IN former times, when fierce religious rage,
And prieſtly ſway deform'd each ſuffering age,
All manly wit, all uſeful learning lay
In darkneſs loſt, nor hop'd returning day.
Religion then was ſtain'd by cruel deeds:
And freeborn Reaſon ſtoop'd to craft and creeds.
But happier we!—And tho' to-night we ſhow
What fatal ills from blind devotion flow,
'Tis not that we ſuch rage renew'd can fear,
Or dread the hand of perſecution here———
Our ſcene would wide humanity impart;
Would breathe extenſive candor thro' the heart;
Show true religion even to error kind,
And claim the perfect freedom of the mind.
If, too, the poet paints a noble ſtriſe
'Twixt the fond huſband and the gen'rous wife;
If all the father in his voice complains,
And all the mother in her tender ſtrains;

If theſe beſt paſſions prompt the pleaſing woe,
Indulge it freely———Nature bids it flow;
Where parent Nature leads, you cannot ſtray;
And what ſhe wills, 'tis virtue to obey.
Fond of BRITANNIA's *fame, and juſt to* YOU,
He bids old Engliſh honour *live anew,*
And calls your great firſt EDWARD *up to view.*
But if his line too weak, his ſtroke too faint,
The graceful figure, in full light, to paint;
In candid part his honeſt meaning take,
And ſpare the poet for the hero's ſake.

The

The PERSONS.

EDWARD, Prince of England,	Mr. Delane.
Earl of GLOSTER,	Mr. Roſco.
THEALD, Archdeacon of Liege,	Mr. Roberts.
SELIM, Sultan of Jaffa,	Mr. Ryan.
ELEONORA, Princeſs of England,	Mrs. Horton.
DARAXA, an Arabian Princeſs,	Mrs. Halam.

Aſſaſſin, Officers, &c.

SCENE, EDWARD's tent in the camp before Jaffa, a city on the coaſt of Paleſtine.

EDWARD and ELEONORA.

A TRAGEDY.

ACT I. SCENE I.

Prince EDWARD, THEALD *Archdeacon of* Liege, *Earl of* GLOSTER.

Edw. I WILL no longer doubt. 'Tis plain, my friends,
That with our little band of Engliſh troops,
By all allies, all weſtern powers deſerted,
All but the noble knights that guard this land,
The flower of Europe, and of Chriſtian valor,
Nought can be done, nought worthy of our cauſe,
Worthy of England's heir, and of the name,
Of Lion-hearted Richard; whoſe renown,

After

After almoſt a century elaps'd,
Shakes thro' its wide extent this eaſtern world.
What elſe could bend the Saracen to peace,
Who might, with better policy, refuſe
To grant it us? yes, to the Prince of Jaffa
I will accord the peace he has demanded:
And tho' my troops, impatient, wait the ſignal
To ſtorm yon walls, yet will I not expoſe,
In vain attempts, valour that ſhould be ſav'd
For better days, and for the public welfare.
Raſh fruitleſs war, for wanton glory wag'd,
Is only ſplendid murder—What ſays Theald?
Approves my reverend father of my purpoſe?

Thea. Edward, illuſtrious heir of England's crown,
I muſt indeed be blinded with the zeal
Of this our holy cauſe, to think your arms,
Thus all forſaken, thus betray'd, ſufficient
To reach the grandeur of your firſt deſign,
And from the yoke of Infidels, to free
The ſacred city, object of our vows;
Yet this, methinks, this Jaffa might be ſeiz'd:
That ſtill were ſomething, an auſpicious omen
Of future conqueſt—But, unſkill'd in war,
To you, my Lord, and Gloſter's wiſe experience,
I this ſubmit.

Edw. Speak, Gloſter, your advice,
Before I fix my lateſt reſolution.

Gloſt. You know, my lord, I never was a friend
To this cruſade. My unchang'd advice
Is ſtrenuous ſtill for peace. Nor this I urge

From

From our deſerted arms, the cauſe betray'd,
But from the ſtate of our unhappy country.
Behold her, Edward, with a filial eye,
And ſay, is this a time for theſe adventures?
Behold her then with deep commotion ſhook,
Beneath a falſe deluſive face of quiet:
Behold her bleeding yet from civil war,
Exhauſted, ſunk; drain'd by ten thouſand arts
Of lawleſs impoſition, prieſtly fraud,
Italian leeches, and inſatiate Rome;
That never raged before with ſuch groſs inſult,
With ſuch abandon'd avarice. Beſides,
Who knows what evil counſellors, again,
Are gather'd round the throne! In times like theſe,
Diſturb'd, and lowring with unſettled freedom,
One ſtep to lawleſs power, one bold attempt
Renew'd, the leaſt infringement of our charters,
Would in the giddy nation raiſe a tempeſt.
Return, my prince. You have already ſav'd
Your father from his foes, from haughty Leiſter:
Now ſave him from his miniſters, from thoſe
Who hold him captive in the worſt of chains—
Edw. You, Gloſter, ſav'd us both.
Glaſt. I did my duty;
Even while I join'd with Leiſter, did my duty——
I hope I did—He, who contends for freedom,
Can ne'er be juſtly deem'd his ſovereign foe:
No, 'tis the wretch that tempts him to ſubvert it,
The ſoothing ſlave, the traitor in the boſom,

Who

Who beſt deſerves that name; he is a worm
That eats out all the happineſs of kingdoms.
Edward, return; loſe not a day, an hour,
Before this city. Tho' your cauſe be holy,
Believe me, 'tis a much more pious office,
To ſave your father's old and broken years,
His mild and eaſy temper, from the ſnares
Of low corrupt inſinuating traitors:
A nobler office far! on the firm baſe
Of well-proportion'd liberty, to build
The common quiet, happineſs, and glory,
Of king and people, England's riſing grandeur.
To you, my prince, this taſk, of right, belongs.
Has not the royal heir a juſter claim
To ſhare his father's inmoſt heart and counſels,
Than aliens to his intereſt, thoſe who make
A property, a market of his honour?
One reaſon more allow me to ſuggeſt
For peace, immediate peace—ſhould blind misfortune,
In this far diſtant hoſtile land, oppreſs us;
A chance to which our weakneſs ſtands expos'd:
What, Edward, of thy princeſs would become,
Thy Eleonora! ſhe, whoſe tender love
Thro' ſtormy ſeas, and in fierce camps attends thee?
What of thy blooming offspring? charg'd with theſe,
To give our courage ſcope were cruel raſhneſs.
Edw. Enough, my lord: I ſtand reſolv'd in peace:
And will to England ſtrait—But where, alas,
Where ſhall we cover our inglorious heads;

* * * When,

When gay with hope the people round us preſs,
To hear by what exploits we have ſuſtain'd
The fame of Richard, and of Engliſh valour?
Shall I, my generous country, I be rank'd
With thoſe weak princes, who conſume thy wealth,
And ſink thy name in idle expeditions?
Perfidious France! Be this the ruling point
Of my whole life, and paſſion of my ſoul,
To humble thee, proud nation!—Mean time, Gloſter,
See that the captive princeſs be reſtor'd,
Daraxa, to the Sultan of this city,
Whoſe bride ſhe is—We wage not war with women.

SCENE II.

EDWARD, THEALD, GLOSTER, *an Officer belonging to the Prince.*

Off. One from the Prince of Jaffa, Sir, demands
Your ſecret ear on ſome important meſſage.
Edw. Conduct him to my tent— [*Officer goes out.*
He brings, I judge,
The Sultan's laſt inſtructions for this peace.
Here wait: I may your faithful counſel want.

SCENE III.

THEALD, GLOSTER.

Thea. Whatever woes, of late, have clouded England,
Yet muſt I, Gloſter, call that nation happy,
On whoſe horizon ſmiles a dawning prince
Of Edward's worth and virtues.

Gloſt. True, my friend;
Edward has great, has amiable virtues,
That virtue chiefly which befits a prince;
He loves the people he muſt one day rule;
With fondneſs loves them, with a noble pride;
Eſteems their good, eſteems their glory his.
One inſtance it becomes me to recount,
That ſhows the genuine greatneſs of his ſoul.
Tho' I have met him in the bloody field,
He fighting for his father, I for freedom;
Yet bears his boſom no remaining grudge
Of thoſe diſtracted times: to me his heart
Is greatly reconcil'd—Virtue! beyond
The little unforgiving ſoul of tyrants!
Now will I tell thee, Theald, whence I ſtoop
To wear the ſtudy chains of court attendance,
At theſe grey years; that ſhould in calm retirement
Paſs the ſoft evening of a buſtling life,
And plume my panting ſoul for better worlds.
Amidſt his many virtues, youthful Edward

Is

Is lofty, warm, and abſolute of temper!
I therefore ſeek to moderate his heat,
To guide his fiery virtues, that, miſled
By dazzling power, and flattering ſycophants,
Might finiſh what his father's weaker meaſures
Have try'd in vain. And hence I here attend him,
In expeditions which I ne'er approv'd,
In holy wars—your pardon, reverend father——
I muſt declare I think ſuch wars the fruit
Of idle courage or miſtaken zeal,
Sometimes of rapine and religious rage,
To every miſchief prompt.

Thea. You wrong, my lord,
You wrong them much. To ſet this matter only
Upon a civil footing: ſay, what right
Had robbers ruſhing from Arabian deſarts,
Fierce as the ſuns that kindled up their rage
Thus, in a barbarous torrent to bear down
All Aſia, Afric, and profane their altars?
And to repel brute force by force is juſt.
Nay, does not even our duty, int'reſt, glory,
The common honour of the Chriſtian name,
Require us to repreſs their wild ambition,
That labours weſtward ſtill, and threatens Europe?

Gloſt. Yes, when they burſt their limits, let us check them:
And with a firmer hand than thoſe looſe Chriſtians,
The moſt corrupt and abject of mankind,
Slaves, doubly ſlaves, who ſuffer'd theſe Arabians,
In virtue their ſuperiors as in valour,

Without reſiſtance to o'er-run the world.
By rage and zeal, 'tis true, their empire roſe!
But now ſome ſettled ages of poſſeſſion
Create a right, than which, I fear, few nations
Can ſhew a better. Sure I am 'tis madneſs,
Inhuman madneſs, thus, from half the world,
To drain its blood and treaſure, to neglect
Each art of peace, each care of government;
And all for what? By ſpreading deſolation,
Rapine and ſlaughter o'er the other half,
To gain a conqueſt we can never hold.
I venerate this land. Thoſe ſacred hills,
Thoſe vales, thoſe cities, trod by ſaints and prophets,
By GOD himſelf, the ſcenes of heavenly wonders,
Inſpire me with a certain awful joy.
But the ſame GOD, my friend, pervades, ſuſtains,
Surrounds and fills this univerſal frame;
And every land where ſpreads his vital preſence,
His all-enlivening breath, to me is holy.
Excuſe me, Theald, if I go too far:
I meant alone to ſay, I think theſe wars
A kind of perſecution. And when that,
That moſt abſurd and cruel of all vices,
Is once begun, where ſhall it find an end?
Each in his turn, or has or claims a right
To wield its dagger, to return its furies;
And, firſt or laſt, they fall upon ourſelves.

Edw. [*behind the ſcenes.*] Inhuman villain! is thy meſſage murder?

Thea. Ha! heard you not the prince exclaiming murder?

Gloſt. Should this Barbarian meſſenger——

[*Moving towards the noiſe.*]

'Tis ſo!

SCENE IV.

THEALD GLOSTER; *to them Prince* EDWARD *wounded in the arm, and dragging in the aſſaſſin.*

Edw. Deteſted wretch! And does the Prince of Jaffa ſend baſe aſſaſſins to tranſact his treaties? There—take thy anſwer ruffian!

[*Stabs him with the dagger he had wreſted from him.*]

Blow too haſty!
I ſhould have ſav'd thee for a fitter death.

Aſſ. I would have triumph'd Chriſtian, in thy rage.
For know, thou vile deſtroyer of the faithful!
That tho' my erring dagger miſs'd thy heart,
Yet has it fir'd thy veins with mortal poiſon,
Whoſe very touch is death—ALLAH be prais'd!
O glorious fate! prophet receive my ſoul! [*Dies.*]

Edw. [*after a ſhort pauſe.*] Why gaze you with amazement on each other?
Are we not men, to whom the various chances
Of life are known?

Gloſt. Ha! poiſon! did he ſay?
Then is at once my prince and country loſt!
O fatal wound to England!

Thea. Quick, my lord,
Retire and have it dreſs'd, without delay;
Ere the fell poiſon can diffuſe its rage,
And deeply taint your blood.
Edw. The princeſs comes!
O ſave me from her tenderneſs!

SCENE V.

EDWARD, THEALD, GLOSTER; *to them the Princeſs* ELEONORA.

Eleon. My Edward!
Support me!—Oh!
Edw. She faints——my Eleonora!
Look up, and bleſs me with thy gentle eyes!——
The colour comes, her cheeks reſume their beauty,
And all her charms revive——Hence, ſpurn that carcaſe:
A ſight too ſhocking for my Eleonora.
Eleon. And lives my Edward, lives my deareſt lord,
From this aſſaſſin ſav'd!—Alas! you bleed!
Edw. 'Tis nothing, my lovely princeſs!—A ſlight wound——
Eleon. But, ah! methought, I entering heard of poiſon,
Tainting the blood—What! was the dagger poiſon'd?
Ha! ſilent all! will none relieve my fears!——
Gloſt. Madam, reſtrain your tenderneſs a moment——

The

The prince delays too long—Let him retire.
Mean while, the troubled camp shall be my care;
Lest the base foe should make a sudden sally,
While yet our troops are stunn'd with this disaster.

Edw. I thank thee, noble Gloster. Nor, alone
Support my troops; go, rouse them to revenge;
Tell them their injur'd prince will try their love,
Their valour soon—And you, my friend, good Theald,
Attend the princess—Chear thee, Eleonora!
I cannot, will not, leave thee long, to vex
Thy tender soul with aggravated fears.

Thea. Behold Daraxa, the false Sultan's bride.

SCENE VI.

ELEONORA, THEALD, DARAXA.

Dar. Princess of England, let me share thy grief.
Whence flow these tears? and what this wild alarm,
This noise of murder and assassination?

Eleon. Alas! The prince is wounded by a ruffian;
And with a poison'd dagger, as I fear.
Yet none will ease me of this racking thought——
Nay, tell me, Theald, since to know the worst
Is oft a kind of miserable comfort;
What has befallen the prince? for this slight wound
Could never thus o'ercast the brave with terror.

Thea. I dare not, princess, rally with your fate.
An impious villain, from the Sultan Selim,
Pretended to the prince a secret message,

About

About the peace in treaty. Dreading nought,
He left us here, and to his tent retir'd,
There to receive this execrable envoy.
Strait with the prince alone, the fierce aſſaſſin,
Attempted on his life; but, in his arm,
He took, it ſeems the blow, and from the villain
Wreſting the dagger, plung'd it to his heart.
This laſt we ſaw, and heard th' inhuman bigot,
Who deem'd himſelf a martyr in their cauſe,
Boaſt, as he dy'd, the prince's wound was poiſon'd—

Eleon. Then all I fear'd is true? then I am wretched,
Beyond even hope!

Dar. A villain from the Sultan:——

Eleon. Ah the diſtracting thought! And is my life!
My love! my Edward! on the brink of fate!
Of fate that may this moment ſnatch him from me!

Dar. What! Selim ſend aſſaſſins! and beneath
A name ſo ſacred! Selim, whoſe renown
Is incenſe breathing o'er the ſweeten'd eaſt:
For each humane, each generous virtue fam'd;
Selim! the rock of faith! and ſun of honour!

Eleon. O complicated woe! The Chriſtian cauſe
Has now no more a patron, and reſtorer;
England no more a prince, in whom ſhe plac'd
Her glory, her delight, her only hope;
Theſe deſolated troops no more a chief;
No more a huſband, a protector, I,
A friend, a lover! and my helpleſs children
No more a father!

Dar.

Dar. Pardon, gentle princeſs,
Yet in this whirlwind of revolving paſſions,
That ſnatch my ſoul by turns, I have forgot
To pay the tribute which I owe thy ſorrows—
But I myſelf, alas! am more unhappy!

Eleon. What woes can equal mine? who loſe, thus vilely,
The beſt! the braveſt! the lovelieſt of mankind!—

Dar. You only loſe the man you love; but I,
O inſupportable! muſt learn to hate,
To ſcorn what once was all my pride and tranſport!
Should Edward die by this accurſed crime,
(Which Heaven forbid) he dies admir'd, belov'd,
In the full bloom of fame and ſpotleſs honour.
To you, the daughter of illuſtrious grief,
Your tears remain, and ſadly ſweet reflection;
You with his image, with his virtues, ſtill,
Amidſt the penſive gloom, may converſe hold:
While I—Ah! nothing meets my blaſted ſight!
But a black view of infamy and horror!
What is the loſs of life to loſs of virtue!
And yet how can this heavenly ſpark be loſt?
No! virtue burns with an immortal flame.
He is bely'd—ſome villain has abus'd him.

Thea. I honour, Madam, this your virtuous grief:
But that the Sultan did employ th' aſſaſſin
Is paſt all doubt—Behold the falſe inſtructions,
By which he gain'd admittance.

[*Giving her the letter the prince had dropt.*]

Dar. Ha!—'Tis ſo!

His

His hand! his ſeal!—From my deteſting heart,
I tear him thus for ever!—Periſh Selim!
Periſh the feeble wretch, who more bewails him!
That were to ſhare his guilt!—Unhappy princeſs!
Now let me turn my ſoul to thy aſſiſtance——
There is a cure, 'tis true——

Eleon. A cure, Daraxa!
O ſay, what cure?

Dar. No; it avails not, Madam;
None can be found to riſk it.

Eleon. None to riſk it?
Quick, tell me what it is, my dear Daraxa.

Dar. To find ſome perſon, that with friendly lip,
May draw the poiſon forth; at leaſt, its rage
And mortal ſpirit. This will bring the wound
Within the power of art: but certain death
Attends the generous deed.

Eleon. [*kneeling.*] Then hear me, Heaven!
Prime ſource of love! Ye ſaints and angels, hear me!
I here devote me for the beſt of men,
Of princes and of huſbands. On this croſs
I ſeal the cordial vow: confirm it, Heaven!
And grant me courage in the hour of trial:

Thea. O tenderneſs unequall'd!

Dar. Glorious princeſs!

Eleon. Go, Theald, quickly find the Earl of Gloſter,
And with him break this matter to the prince.
As for the perſon, leave that taſk to me.

With Daraxa will your call attend;
O all ye powers of love, your influence lend.

End of the First Act.

ACT II. SCENE I.

GLOSTER, THEALD.

Gloſt. NO, Theald, no; he never will conſent—
I know him well; he ne'er will purchaſe life
At ſuch a rate: beſides, in aid of love,
His generous pride would come, and deem it baſeneſs.
Thea. Then is yon ſun his laſt. The black'ning wound
Begins already to confeſs the poiſon—
Mean time, my lord, both friendſhip and our duty
Demand, at leaſt, the trial. Well I know,
That poiſe his life with hers, he would as nothing
Eſteem his own: but ſure the life of thouſands,
The mingled cauſe at once of heaven and earth,
Should o'er the beſt, the deareſt life prevail.
Gloſt. Alas! my friend, you *reaſon*, Edward *loves*.
How weak the head contending with the heart!
Yet be the trial made—Behold he comes.

SCENE

SCENE II.

EDWARD, GLOSTER, THEALD.

Edw. [*Entering*] O thou bright ſun! now haſt'ning to thoſe climes,
That parent-iſle, which I no more ſhall ſee;
And for whoſe welfare oft my youthful heart
Has vainly form'd ſo many a fond deſign;
O thither bear, reſplendent orb of day,
To that dear ſpot of earth, my laſt farewell!
And oh! eternal Providence, whoſe courſe,
Amidſt the various maze of life, is fix'd
By boundleſs wiſdom, and by boundleſs love,
I follow thee, with reſignation, hope,
With confidence and joy; for thou art good,
And of thy riſing goodneſs is no end!
Well-met, my deareſt friends!—It was too true
The villain's threatening, and I nearly touch
That awful hour which every man muſt prove,
Yet every man ſtill ſhifts at diſtance from him.
Come then, and let us fill the ſpace between
Theſe laſt important moments, whence we take
Our lateſt tincture for eternity,
With ſolemn converſe and exalting friendſhip—
Nay—Theald—Gloſter—wound me not with tears,
With tears that fall o'er venerable cheeks!
What could the princeſs more?—Ah! there, indeed,
At every thought of her, I feel a weight,

A dreadful weight of tenderneſs, that ſhakes
My firmeſt reſolution—Where is ſhe?

Thea. She burns with fond impatience to attend you.

Edw. And how, brave Gloſter, did you leave the camp?

Gloſt. The camp, Sir, is ſecure: each ſoldier there
From indignation draws new force and ſpirit.
O 'tis a glorious, an affecting ſight!
Thoſe furrow'd cheeks that never knew before
The dew of tears, now in a copious ſhower
Are bath'd. Around your tent they, anxious, crowd,
Rank over rank: ſome preſſing for a look;
Some ſadly muſing, with dejected eye;
Some, on their knees, preferring vows to Heaven;
And, with extended arm, ſome breathing vengeance.
"Baſe Saracens, they cry, perfidious cowards!
"But blood ſhall waſh out blood—Ah! poor atonement,
"Did the whole bleeding city fall a victim!"

Edw. Alas, that to repay their faithful love
I cannot live!—Yet moderate their zeal;
And let the ſword of juſtice only ſtrike
The faithleſs Selim, and his guilty council.
My new-departed ſpirit, juſt eſcap'd
From the low fev'riſh paſſions of this life,
Would grieve to ſee the blood of innocence,
With that of guilt confounded, ſtain my tomb.

Thea. Permit me, Sir, the hope, that you yourſelf—
I ſpeak it as juſt cauſe—may live to puniſh
This breach of all the ſacred rights of men.

Edw. Why will you turn my thoughts, from such enlarg'd,
To ſoft enfeebling views of life again?
Thea. Not to a vain deſire of life, my lord,
I would recal them; but inſpire each hope,
Adviſe each poſſibility to ſave it.
And there is yet a remedy.
Edw. Deluſion!
Thea. The fair Arabian princeſs mention'd one.
Edw. She one!—Daraxa!—ſomething to complete
Her lover's crime.
Thea. You could not wrong her thus,
Had you beheld the tempeſt of her ſoul,
Her grief, her rage, confuſion, when ſhe heard
Of Selim's baſeneſs; had you ſeen that honour,
That glorious fire which darted from her eyes;
Till in a flood of virtuous ſorrow ſunk
She almoſt equal'd Eleonora's tears.
Edw. What was it ſhe propos'd?
Thea. It was, my lord,
To find ſome perſon, who, with friendly lip,
Might draw the deadly ſpirit——
Edw. I have heard
Of ſuch a cure; but is it not, good Theald,
An action fatal to the kind performer?
Thea. Yes, ſurely fatal,
Edw. Name it then no more.
I ſhould deſpiſe the paltry life it ſnatch'd.
Beſides, what mortal can diſpoſe ſo raſhly
Of his own life? Talk not of ſo baſe condition,

And

...my public rank: when life or death
...comes the queſtion, all diſtinctions vaniſh;
Then the firſt monarch and the loweſt ſlave
On the ſame level ſtand, in this the ſons
Of equal nature all.

Thea. Allow me, Sir.
If 'tis a certain, an eſtabliſh'd duty,
Than duty more, the height of human virtue,
To ſacrifice a tranſitory life
For that kind ſource from whence it is deriv'd,
And all its guarded joys, our deareſt country;
It may be juſtly ſacrific'd for thoſe
On whom depends the welfare of the public.
And there is one, my lord, who ſtands devoted,
By ſolemn and irrevocable vows,
To die for you.

Edw. To die for me!—Kind Nature!
Thanks to thy forming hand, I can myſelf,
Chearful, ſuſtain to pay this debt I owe thee,
Without the borrow'd ſuff'rings of another.
No, Theald, urge this argument no more.
I love not life to that degree, to purchaſe,
By the ſure death of ſome brave guiltleſs friend,
A few uncertain days, that often riſe,
Like this, ſerene and gay, when, with ſwift wing,
A moment wraps them in diſaſtrous fate.

Gloſt. Did we conſult to ſave your ſingle life,
Was that the preſent queſtion, thy refuſal
Were juſt, were generous. But, my lord, this perſon,
Who ſtands for you devoted, ſhould, in that

Be deem'd devoted for the Chriſtian cauſe,
The common cauſe of Europe and thy country,
Dies for the brave companions of thy fortune,
Who weeping now around thy tent conjure thee
To live for them, and England's promis'd glory.
O ſave our country, Edward! ſave a nation,
The choſen land, the laſt retreat of freedom,
Amidſt a world enſlav'd!—Caſt back thy view,
And trace from fartheſt times her old renown.
Think of the blood, that, to maintain her rights,
And guard her ſheltering laws, has flow'd in battle,
Or on the patriot's ſcaffold. Think what cares,
What vigilance, what toils, what bright contention,
In councils, camps, and well-diſputed ſenates,
It coſt our generous anceſtors, to raiſe
A matchleſs plan of freedom: whence we ſhine,
Even in the jealous eye of hoſtile nations,
The happieſt of mankind.—Then ſee all this,
This virtue, wiſdom, toil, and blood, of ages,
Behold it ready to be loſt for ever.
In this important, this deciſive hour,
On thee, and thee alone, our weeping country
Turns her diſtreſsful eye; to thee ſhe calls,
And with a helpleſs parent's piercing voice.
Wilt thou not live for her? for her ſubdue
A graceful pride, I own, but ſtill a pride,
That more becomes thy courage and thy youth,
Than birth and public ſtation. Nay, for her
Say, wouldſt thou not reſign the deareſt pleaſure?

Edw.

O there is nothing, which for thee, my country,
I, in my proper perſon, could not ſuffer!
But thus to ſculk behind another's life,
'Tis what I have not courage to ſupport,
It makes a kind of coward of me, Gloſter,
But let me ſee this friend, whoſe generous virtue
Exceeds what even my favourable thoughts
Had imag'd in the ſelfiſh race of man.
The purpoſe claims the merit of the deed;
And ere I die I muſt requite his friendſhip.
Conduct him hither, Theald.

SCENE III.

EDWARD, GLOSTER.

Edw. Ah, my Gloſter,
You have not touch'd on ſomething that here pleads
For longer life, beyond the force of reaſon,
Perhaps too powerful pleads—my Eleonora!
To thee, my friend I will not be aſham'd
Even to avow my love in all its fondneſs.
For oh there ſhines in this my dearer ſelf!
This partner of my ſoul! ſuch a mild light
Of careleſs charms, of unaffected beauty,
Such more than beauty, ſuch endearing goodneſs,
That when I meet her eye, where cordial faith,
And every gentle virtue mix their luſtre,
I feel a tranſport that partakes of anguiſh!

How shall I then behold her, on the point
To leave her, Gloſter, in a diſtant land?
For ever in a ſtormy world to leave her?
There is no miſery to be fear'd like that
Which from our greateſt happineſs proceeds!

SCENE IV.

EDWARD, GLOSTER, THEALD *preſenting the princeſs* ELEONORA *as the perſon he went to bring*, DARAXA.

Edw. O Heaven!—what do I ſee?—I am betray'd!
[*Turning away.*]

Eleon. Edward!

Edw. O 'tis too much! O ſpare me, Nature!

Eleon. Not look upon me, Edward?

Edw. Eleonora!
How on this dreadful errand canſt thou come?

Eleon. Behold me kneel——

Edw. Why kneel you, beſt of women!
You ne'er offended, ne'er in thought offended!
Thou art all truth, and love, and angel-goodneſs!
Why do you kneel? O riſe, my Eleonora.

Eleon. Let me fulfil my vow.

Edw. O never! never!—

Eleon. Let me preſerve a life, in which is wrapt
The life of thouſands dearer than my own,
Live thou, and let me die for thee, my lord!

Edw. For me! thy words are daggers to my ſoul:
And would'ſt thou have me live thus meanly ſave
A deſpicable life? a life expos'd

To

To t[illegible] worſt torment, to my own contempt
A[illegible] ſtill haunted by the cruel image
Of th[illegible] laſt pangs, thy agonizing throws,
The dire convulſions of theſe tender limbs;
And all for one—O infamy!—for one,
By love, by duty bound, each manly tie,
Even by a peaſant's honour, to protect thee?
Yet this, tho' ſtrong, invincible, is nought
To what my wounded tenderneſs could urge
Againſt thy dire requeſt—But ſhould fate demand
The life we love, then, then, we muſt exert
The greateſt act of human reſignation;
We muſt ſubmit. But wouldſt thou have me, ſay,
Doom thee myſelf? with voluntary choice,
Nay, by a barbarous crime, untimely ſnatch
This worſt of ills? Would Eleonora make me
Of all mankind the moſt completely wretched?

Eleon. Plead not the voice of honour. Well I know,
There is no danger, pain, no form of death,
Thou wouldſt not meet with tranſport to protect me.
But I, alas! an unimportant woman,
Whoſe only boaſt and merit is to love thee;
Ah, what am I, with nameleſs numbers weigh'd?
With myriads, yet unborn? All ranks, all ages,
All arts, all virtues, all a ſtate comprizes?
Theſe have a higher claim to thy protection.
Live then for them. O make a generous effort!
What none but heroes can, bid the ſoft paſſions
The private ſtoop to thoſe that graſp the public,
Live to poſſeſs the pleaſure of a God,

To

To bleſs a people truſted to thy care,
Live to fulfil thy long career of glory,
But juſt begun. To die for thee be mine.
I ne'er can find a brighter happier fate!
And fate will come at laſt, inglorious fate!
O grudge me not a portion of thy fame!
As join'd in love, O raiſe me to thy glory!

Edw. In vain is all thy eloquence. The more
Thou wouldſt perſuade, I, with increaſing horror,
Fly from thy purpoſe.

Eleon. Doſt thou love me, Edward?

Edw. Oh!—If I love thee?—Witneſs heaven and earth!
Angels of death, that hover round me, witneſs!
Witneſs theſe blinded eyes, theſe trembling arms,
This heart that beats unutterable fondneſs,
To what an agony I love thee——

Eleon. Then
Thou ſure wilt ſave me from the worſt of pains.

Edw. O that I could from all engroſs thy ſufferings!
Pain felt for thee were pleaſure!

Eleon. Hear me, Edward.
I ſpeak the ſtricteſt truth, no ſlight of paſſion;
I ſpeak my naked heart.—To die, I own,
In a dread paſſage, terrible to nature,
Chiefly to thoſe who love, like me, been happy.—
But to ſurvive thee—O 'tis greatly worſe!
'Tis a continual death. I cannot bear
The very thought—O leave me not behind thee!

Edw. Since nought can alter my determin'd breaſt,
Why

W[illegible]oft thou pierce me with this killing image?

Eleon. Ah! selfish that thou art! with thee the toil,
The tedious toil of life will soon be o'er;
Thou soon wilt hide thee in the quiet grave:
While I, a lonely widow, with my orphans,
Am left defenceless to a troubled world,
A false, ingrateful and injurious world!——
Oh! if thou lov'st me, Edward, I conjure thee,
By that celestial flame which blends our souls!
By all a father, all a mother feels!
By every holy tenderness, I charge thee!
Live to protect the pledges of our love,
Our children!——

Edw. Oh!——

Eleon. Our young, our helpless—

Edw. Oh ——.

Distraction!—Let me go!

Eleon. Nay, drag me with thee——
To the kind tomb—Thou canst not leave our children
Expos'd, by being thine, beyond the lowest!
Surrounded with the perils of a throne!—

Edw. Cruel! no more embitter thus our last,
Our parting moment! Set no more the terrors
Of these best passions in array against me!
For by that power, I swear, Father of life!
Whose universal love embraces all
That breathes this ample air; whose perfect wisdom
Brings light from darkness, and from evil good:
To whom I recommend thee, and my children:
By Him I swear! I never will submit
To what thy horrid tenderness proposes!

Glost.

Gloſt. My lord——

Edw. Oh!—theſe emotions are too much—
I feel a heavy languor ſteal upon me:
The working poiſon clogs the ſprings of life.
Conduct me to my couch—Ah! Eleonora!
If we ne'er meet again—This one embrace—
Yet ſink not to deſpair—Heaven may preſerve me
By means ſuperior to all human hope.

Eleon. I will not, cannot quit thee!——

SCENE V.

ELEONORA, DARAXA.

Dar. Princeſs, ſtay.
Think not the hand of death is yet upon him;
Reſiſtleſs ſleep will firſt oppreſs his ſenſes,
Before the laſt convulſive pangs come on;
For ſo the numbing poiſon oft begins
To ſpread its dark malignity.——

Eleon. Ha!—Sleep!
Then is the time—Thanks to inſpiring Heaven!
But come, and ere the venom ſink too deep,
Swift let me ſeize the favouring hour of ſleep.

End of the Second Act.

ACT

ACT III. SCENE I.

GLOSTER.

O Miracle of love! O wondrous princeſs!
'Tis ſuch as thou, who keep the gentle flame,
That animates ſociety, alive,
Who make the dwellings of mankind delightful.
What is vain life? an idle flight of days,
A ſtill deluſive round of ſickly joys,
A ſcene of little cares and trifling paſſions,
If not enobled by ſuch deeds of virtue?
And yet this matchleſs virtue! what avails it?
Th' afflicting angel has forſook the prince,
And now pours out his terrors on the princeſs.
Forſook him, ſaid I?—No; he muſt awake
To keener evils than the body knows,
Which minds alone, and generous minds can feel.
O virtue! virtue! as thy joys excel,
So are thy woes tranſcendent; the groſs world
Knows not the bliſs or miſery of either—
The prince forſakes his couch—He ſeems renew'd
In health—Ah, ſhort deceitful gleam of eaſe!

SCENE

SCENE II.

EDWARD, GLOSTER.

Edw. [*advancing from his couch.*] Hail to the freſher earth and brighter day!
I feel me lighten'd of the mortal load
That lay upon my ſpirits. This kind ſleep
Has ſhed a balmy quiet thro' my veins.
Whence this amazing change?——
But be my firſt chief care, Author of good!
To bend my ſoul in gratitude to thee!
Thou, when blind mortals wander thro' the deeps
Of comfortleſs deſpair, with timely hand,
Inviſible, and by unthought-of ways,
Thus lead'ſt them forth into thy light again.
Gloſt. How fares my lord, the prince?
Edw. To health reſtor'd.
Only a kind of laſſitude remains,
A not unpleaſing weakneſs hangs upon me:
Like the ſoft trembling of the ſettled deep,
After a ſtorm.
Gloſt. Father of health be prais'd!
Edw. The moment that I ſunk upon my couch,
A ſick and troubled ſlumber fell upon me;
Chaos of gloomy unconnected thought!
That, in black eddy whirling, made ſleep more dreadful
Than the worſt waking pang. While thus I toſs'd,
Ready to bid farewel to ſuffering clay,
Me

Me thought an angel came and touch'd my wound.
At this the parting gloom clear'd up apace;
My ſlumbers ſoften'd; and, with health, return'd
Serenity of mind, and order'd thought,
And fair ideas gladd'ning all the ſoul.
Aërial muſic too, by fancy heard,
Sooth'd my late pangs, and harmoniz'd my breaſt.
Thro' ſhades of bliſs I walk'd, where heav'nly forms
Sung to their lutes my Eleonora's love—
But where is ſhe? the glory of her ſex!
O dearer, juſtly dearer, far than ever!
Quick, let me find her, pour into her boſom
My full, full ſoul, with tenderneſs o'ercharg'd,
With glad ſurpriſe, with gratitude and wonder.——
Ha! why this ſilence? this dejected look?
You caſt a drooping eye upon the ground.
Where is the princeſs?

Gloſt. She, my lord, repoſes.

Edw. Repoſes!—No!—It is not likely, Gloſter,
That ſhe would yield her weeping eyes to ſleep,
While I lay there in agonies—away!
I am too feeble then to know the truth.
Say, is ſhe well?

Gloſt. Now ſhow thy courage, Edward——

Edw. O all my fears! I ſhall ſtart out to madneſs:
What!—while I ſlept?

Gloſt. Yes—

Edw. Miſery! diſtraction!
My peace, my honour is betray'd for ever!
O love! O ſhame! O murder'd Eleonora!

SCENE III.

GLOSTER.

Unhappy prince! go find thy Eleonora,
And in heart-easing grief exhale thy passion:
All other comfort, now, were to talk down
The winds and raging seas.—But yonder comes
Th' Arabian princess. From her tears I learn
The moving scene within.

SCENE IV.

GLOSTER, DARAXA, *a Messenger from* SELIM, *attending at some distance.*

Dar. O! 'tis too much!
I can no more support it.
Glost. Generous mourner,
How is it with the princess Eleonora!
Dar. Struck by the poison on her couch she lies,
A rose soft-drooping in Sabean vales,
Beneath the fiery dog-star's noxious rage.
O Christian chief, I never shall forget
The scene these melting eyes have just beheld,
With mingled tears of tenderness and wonder.
Glost. How was it, Madam?
Dar. When this pride of women,
This best of wives which in his radiant course

The

The ſun beholds, when firſt ſhe, ſick'ning, felt
Th' imperious ſummons of approaching fate,
All rob'd in ſpotleſs white ſhe ſought the altar;
And, proſtrate there, for her departing ſoul,
The prince her huſband, and her orphan-children,
Implor'd th' Eternal Mind.—As yet ſhe held
Her ſwelling tears, and in her boſom kept
Her ſighs repreſs'd: nor did the near approach
Of the pale king of terrors dim her beauty;
No, rather, adding to her charms, it breath'd
A certain mournful ſweetneſs thro' her features:
But as th' increaſing bane more deſperate grew,
Wild to her bed ſhe ruſh'd; and then indeed,
The lovely fountains of her eyes were opened,
Then flow'd her tears.—"Connubial bed," ſhe cry'd,
"Chaſte witneſs of my tenderneſs for him,
"To ſave whoſe life I unrepining die
"In bloom of youth, farewel!—Thou ſhalt, perhaps,
"Receive a fairer, a more happy bride;
"But never a more faithful, never one
"Who loves her huſband with a fonder paſſion."
Here flow'd her tears afreſh; with burning lip
She preſs'd the humid couch, and wept again.
At laſt, while weary ſorrow paus'd, ſhe roſe,
And, fearing leſt immediate death might ſeize her,
Demanded to be led to ſee the prince;
But fear of chaſing from his eyes, too ſoon,
The ſalutary ſleep that heal'd his pangs,
Reſtrain'd her trembling footſteps. On her couch,
Abandon'd to deſpair, ſhe ſunk anew.

And for her children call'd. Her children came.
A while, supported on her arm, she ey'd them,
With tears pursuing tears a-down her cheek,
With all the speechless misery of woe——
I see her still—O God!—the powerful image
Dissolves me into tears!

Glost. Madam, proceed.
Such tears are virtue, and excel the joys
Of wanton pride.

Dar. Then starting up, she went
To snatch them to a mother's last embrace;
When strait, reflecting that the piercing poison
Might taint their tender years, she sudden shrunk
With horror back——"O wretched Eleonora!
"(She weeping cry'd) and must I then not taste
"The poor remaining comfort of the dying,
"To see a husband, clasp my dearest children,
"And mix my parting soul with theirs I love?"
Her sad attendants, that till then had mourn'd
In silent sorrow, all, at this, gave way
To loud laments—She rais'd her languid eye,
And casting on them round a gracious smile,
To each by name she call'd, even to the lowest,
To each extended mild her friendly hand,
Gave, and, by turns, receiv'd a last farewel.
Such is the dreadful scene from which I come.

Glost. How heighten'd now with Edward's mingled woes!
Why are my lingering years reserv'd for this?

Dar. Come nearer, you, the messengers of Selim,
And

And bear him back this anſwer——His chief aim,
He ſays, in ſtooping to ſolicit peace,
Was from the chains of infidels to ſave me.
What! was it then to reſcue me he ſent,
Beneath an all-rever'd and ſacred name,
Beneath the ſhelter of his hand and ſeal,
A murdering wretch, a ſacrilegious bigot,
To ſtab at once the gallant prince of England,
And public faith? nay, with a poiſon'd dagger
(Such his inhuman cowardice) to ſtab him?
So well, 'tis true, he judg'd: the Chriſtian prince
Had now been mingled with the harmleſs dead;
If his bright princeſs, glorious Eleonora,
Had not redeem'd his dearer life with her's.
You heard in what extremity ſhe lyes.
Go, tell the tyrant then—O heaven and earth!
O vanity of virtue! that Daraxa
Should e'er to Selim ſend ſo fell a meſſage——
I will ſuppreſs its bitterneſs—Yet tell him,
This crime has plac'd eternal bars betwixt us.
See my laſt tear to Love—Arabian wilds
Shall bury 'midſt their rocks the loſt Daraxa.
Away!

Gloſt. Behold they bear this way the princeſs,
Once more to taſte the ſweetneſs of the ſun,
Ere yet to mortal light ſhe bid farewel.

SCENE V.

GLOSTER, DARAXA, THEALD, EDWARD, ELEONORA *born in by her attendants on a couch.*

Eleon. [*entering.*] A little on, a little further on,
Bear me, my friends, into the cooling air.
O chearful ſun! O vital light of day!
Edw. That ſun is witneſs of our matchleſs woes,
Is witneſs of our innocence—Alas!
What have we done to merit this diſaſter?
Eleon. O earth! O genial rooſs! O the dear coaſt
Of Albion's iſle! which I no more ſhall ſee!—
Edw. Nay, yield not to thy weakneſs, Eleonora!
Suſtain thyſelf a little, nor deſert me!
Th' all ruling Goodneſs may relieve us ſtill.
Eleon. Edward! I tremble! terror ſeizes on me!
Thro' the rent veil of yon ſurrounding ſky,
I had a glimpſe, I ſaw th' eternal world.
They call, they urge me hence—Yes, I obey,
But O forgive me heaven! if 'tis with pain,
With agonies, I tear my ſoul from his!
Edw. Heavens! what I ſuffer—How thy plaintive voice
Shoots anguiſh through my ſoul!
Eleon. Some pow'r unſeen——
Thy hand, my Edward—ſome dark power unſeen
Is dragging me away—O yet a little,

A little, ſpare me!—Ah! how ſhall I leave
My weeping friends, my huſband, and my children?
Edw. Unhappy friends! O greatly wretched huſband!
And O poor careleſs orphans, who not feel
The depth of your misfortune!
Eleon. Lay me down;
Soft, lay me down—my powers are all diſſolv'd——
A little forward bend me—Oh!
Edw. O heaven!
How that ſoft frame is torn with cruel pangs!
Pangs robb'd from me!
Eleon. 'Tis thence they borrow eaſe—
My children! O my children! you no more
Have now a mother; now, alas! no more
Have you a mother, O my hapleſs children!
Edw. What do I hear! What deſolating words
Are theſe? more bitter than a thouſand deaths!
Death to my ſoul! Call up thy failing ſpirit,
And leave me not to miſery and ruin!
Eleon. Edward, I feel an interval of eaſe;
And ere I die, have ſomething to impart
That will relieve my ſufferings.
Edw. Speak, my ſoul!
Speak thy deſire: I live but to fulfil it.
Eleon. Thou ſeeſt in what a hopeleſs ſtate I lie.
I who this morning roſe in pride of youth,
High-blooming, promis'd many happy years.
I die for thee, I ſelf-devoted die,
Think not, from this, that I repent my vow:

Or

Or that, with little vanity, I boaſt it:
No: what I did, from unrepenting love
I chearful did, from love that knows no fear,
No pain, no weak remiſſion of its ardor.
And what, alas! what was it but the dictate
Of honour, and of duty? nay, 'twas ſelfiſh,
To ſave me from unſufferable pain,
From dragging here a wretched life without thee.
Two fears yet ſtand betwixt my ſoul and peace.
One is for thee, leſt thou diſturb my grave
With tears of wild deſpair. Grieve not like thoſe
Who have no hope. We yet ſhall meet again;
We ſtill are in a kind Creator's hand;
Eternal Goodneſs reigns! Beſides, this parting,
This parting, Edward, muſt have come at laſt,
When years of friendſhip had, perhaps, exalted
Our love, if that can be, to keener anguiſh.
Think what thy ſtation, what thy fame demanded;
Nor yield thy virtue even to worthy paſſions.
My other care—my other care is idle———
From that thy equal tenderneſs with mine,
Thy love and generoſity ſecure me,
Our children———

Edw. Yes, I penetrate thy fear,
But hear me, dying ſweetneſs! On this hand,
This cold pale hand I vow, our children never,
Shall never call another by the name
Sacred to theirs my Eleonora's children
Shall never feel the hateful power thou fear'ſt.
As one in life, ſo death cannot divide us.
Nor high deſcent, nor beauty, nought that ſmiles,

In

In her unbounded vanity of heart,
Can wiſh, ſhall ever tempt my faith from thee,
Shall ever, ſaid I? Piteous boaſt indeed!
O nothing *can*!—I ſhould be groſs of heart,
Taſteleſs and dull as earth, to think with patience,
Without abhorrence of a ſecond *Hymen*,
Where can I find ſuch beauty? Where ſuch grace,
The ſoul of beauty? Where ſuch winning charms?
Where ſuch a ſoft divinity of goodneſs?
Such faith? ſuch love? ſuch tenderneſs unequal'd?
Such all that Heaven could give—to make me wretched!
Talk not of comfort—Into what a gulph
A lone abyſs of miſery I fall,
The moment that I loſe thee—Oh! I know not!
I dare not think!—But theſe unhappy orphans——
Ah the dire cauſe that makes it double duty ——
Shall now be doubly mine; to ſhelter them,
Theſe pledges of our love, I will attempt
To brave the horrors of loath'd life without thee.

Eleon. Enough! it is enough! On this condition
Receive them from my hands.

Edw. Dear hands! dear gift!
Dear, precious, dying, miſerable gift!
With tranſport once receiv'd, but now with anguiſh!

Eleon. All ſoft'ning time will heal my woes. The dead
Soon leave the paſſions of the living free.

Edw. Deteſted life—O take me, take me with thee.

Eleon. No, Edward, live; or elſe I die in vain.

Edw.

Edw. Raiſe, raiſe, my Eleonora, thy ſweet eyes,
Once more behold thy children———
Eleon. Oh!—'Tis darkneſs—
A deadly weight———
Edw. Thou leav'ſt me then for ever!
Eleon. Where am I?—Ah—a tenant ſtill to pain.
The quiv'ring flame of life leaps up a little.
Mean-time, my Edward, 'tis my laſt requeſt,
That thou would'ſt leave me, while I yet enjoy
A parting gleam of thought—Leave me to Heaven!
Gloſter—farewel—Be careful of the prince———
Attend him hence—and double now thy friendſhip!
Edw. Barbarian! off!—Ah! whither would'ſt thou drag me!
Cloſt. My lord, in pity to the princeſs——
Edw. Oh!
Eleon. Farewel! farewel!—Receive my laſt adieu,
Edward! my deareſt lord! farewel for ever!
Edw. O word of horror!—Can I?—No! I cannot!
There, take me, lead me, hurl me to perdition!

SCENE VI.

ELEONORA, DARAXA, THEALD, *Attendants.*

Eleon. 'Tis paſt, the bitterneſs of death is paſt—
Alas! Daraxa, I can ne'er requite
Thy gentle cares of me. Thou art the cauſe
My Edward lives, my children have a father,
Thy heaven-inſpir'd propoſal!—Tell him, Theald,
That

That in the troubled moments of our parting,
I had forgot to beg he would reſtore
Th' Arabian princeſs to her friends and country—
Thy hand—This ſure, howe'er in faith we differ,
Humanity, the ſoul of all religion,
May well permit.

Dar. By virtue's ſacred fire!
Our paradiſe, the garden of the bleſt,
Ne'er ſmil'd upon a purer ſoul than thine.
For me, think not of me; ſuch are my woes,
That I diſdain all care, deteſt relief:
My name is trod in duſt; thine beams for ever,
The richeſt gem that crowns the worth of woman.

Eleon. The guilt of Selim cannot ſtain thy virtues:
It rather lends them luſtre———Bear me back,
My dear attendants: and good Theald, come
Come, aid my mounting ſoul to ſpring away,
From the lov'd fetters of this kindred clay.

End of the Third Act.

ACT

ACT IV SCENE I.

THEALD, *and a gentleman belonging to him.*

Thea. TO me a derviſe! thro' the furious camp,
Yet raging at the perfidy of Selim,
How did he ſafely paſs?
Gent. Sir, he had fallen
A victim to their vengeance; but he told them,
His life was of importance to the prince,
That he who ſtruck him ſtabb'd the heart of Edward.
This ſtay'd their rage; then after a ſtrict ſearch,
They let him paſs thro' ranks of glaring eyes.
I have beſides to ſay, an Engliſh ſhip
And one from Italy are juſt arriv'd:
The firſt brings great diſpatches to Prince Edward;
The other, holy father, theſe to you. [*kneeling.*]
Thea. Go bid this derviſe enter.

SCENE II.

THEALD *he opens and looks on the diſpatches.*

Awful Heaven!
Great ruler of the various heart of man!
Selim

Since thou haſt rais'd me to conduct thy church,
Without the baſe cabal too often practis'd,
Beyond my wiſh, my thought, give me the lights,
The virtues which that ſacred truſt requires:
A loving, lov'd, unterrifying power,
Such as becomes a father: humble wiſdom;
Plain, primitive ſincerity; kind zeal,
For truth and virtue rather than opinions;
And, above all, the charitable ſoul
Of healing peace and Chriſtian moderation,
The derviſe comes.

SCENE III.

THEALD, SELIM *diſguiſ'd as a derviſe.*

Thea. With me what would'ſt thou, derviſe?
Sel. The princeſs Eleonora, lives ſhe ſtill?
Thea. She lives, and that is all.
Sel. Allah be prais'd!
Then lives the honour of the bright'ning name
Of Saracen and Muſſulman.
Thea. How, derviſe?
What can wipe out the horror of this deed?
Sel. The deed was execrable; but my hand
This inſtant ſhall prevent its dire effect.
I bring a certain remedy for poiſon;
Nor can it come too late; while wandering life
Yet, with ſaint pulſe, ſtirs in the veins.
Thea. Ha! derviſe, art thou ſure of what thou
ſay'ſt?

Sel. Chriſtian, I am; and therefore am I here.
Haſte, lead me to the princeſs; tho' ſhe lay
Even in the laſt extremity; tho' call'd
By the fierce angel who compels the dead,
Yet bold experience gives me room to hope;
Oft have I ſeen its vital touch diffuſe
New vigour thro' the poiſon'd ſtreams of life,
When almoſt ſettled into deed ſtagnation:
Swift as a ſouthern gale unbinds the flood.
Say, wilt thou truſt me with the trial, Chriſtian!

Thea. Thou know'ſt, we have great reaſon for diſtruſt;
But fear in thoſe who can no longer hope,
Were idle and abſurd.

Sel. Bright heaven! what fear?
Is there a ſlave of ſuch inhuman baſeneſs
To add freſh outrage to a dying princeſs?
For virtue dying! look into my eye:
Does one weak ray there ſhun the keeneſt gaze?
Say, doſt thou there behold ſo foul a bottom?

Thea. Not ſeeming truth and generous candour

In what [illegible] Come, follow me, good [illegible]

SCENE IV.

THEALD, SELIM *disguis'd*, DARAXA.

Dar. At last, thro' various pangs the dying princess
Sees the delivering moment, and demands
Thy presence, reverend Christian.
Thea. Dervise, come.
Forbid it, Heaven, this aid should be too late!

SCENE V.

DARAXA.

Heaven! can it be! the very face of Selim!
'Tis he himself——I know him, 'tis the Sultan:
And, as he shot athwart me, from his eye
Flash'd the proud light'ning of affronted virtue.
He must be innocent; his being here
Is radiant proof he must—O weak Daraxa!
What man of virtue mo[illegible] could [illegible] to [illegible]
His image in thy breast! Ah, what avails
[illegible] love, the [illegible] friendship
That, w[illegible] inhuman cowardice, [illegible]
A worthy man to infamy and [illegible]
They [illegible] what aid?
[illegible]
Alas! [illegible]
Death [illegible] O [illegible]

To ſnatch one parting look; but ſee the prince,
Rous'd by the ſounds of ſorrow, this way comes.
Unhappy prince! I venerate his tears———
O gracious Allah! pity and ſupport him. [*Exit.*

SCENE VI.

EDWARD.

That cry was death: Alas! ſhe is no more!
The matchleſs Eleonora is no more!—
Where am I?—Heavens!—Ah! what a hideous deſart
Is now this world, this blaſted world around me!
O ſun, I hate thee, I abhor thy light,
That ſhews not Eleonora! Earth, thy joy,
Thy ſweetneſs all is fled, all, all that made
Thy ways to me delightful, Eleonora!
O Eleonora! periſh'd Eleonora!
For ever loſt!—That tent! ah me! that tent!
[*Going into the tent ſtarts back.*
I dare not enter there. There death diſplays
His utmoſt terrors—Pale and lifeleſs, there
She lyes, whoſe looks were love, whoſe beauty ſmil'd
The ſweet effulgence of endearing virtue———
And here I laſt beheld her!—Ay, and now,
And now beheld her!—The remorſeleſs [illegible]
Will haunt me to the [illegible]——I [illegible] ſuffering,
With ſemale [illegible] pain [illegible]

Fearful

Fearful and bold at once, with the ſtrong hand
Of mighty love conſtraining feeble nature,
To ſteal me from affliction—Let me fly
This fatal ground—But whither ſhall I fly?
To England—O I cannot bear the thought
Of e'er returning to that country more!
That country, witneſs of our happy days,
Where at each ſtep remember'd bliſs will ſting
My ſoul to anguiſh. I already hear
Malice exclaim, nay, bluſhing valour ſigh;
Where is thy princeſs? where the wiſh of thouſands?
The charm, the tranſport of the public eye?
Baſe prince; and art thou not aſham'd to bring
No trophy home but Eleonora's corſe?———
The grave too is ſhut up, that laſt retreat
Of wretched mortals—Yes, my word is paſs'd,
To Eleonora paſs'd. Our orphan children
Bind me to life——O dear, O dangerous paſſions!
The valiant, in himſelf, what can he ſuffer?
Or what does he regard his ſingle woes?
But when, alas, he multiplies himſelf
To dearer ſelves, to the lov'd tender fair,
To thoſe who bleſs, whoſe being hangs upon him,
To helpleſs children! then, O then! he feels
The point of miſery feſt ring in his heart,
And weakly weeps his fortune [illegible]
Such, ſuch am I [illegible] done!——

SCENE VII.

EDWARD, GLOSTER.

Edw. My lord of Gloſter,
I thought my orders were to be alone.
Gloſt. Forgive my fond intruſion.—But I cannot
Be ſo regardleſs of thy welfare, Edward,
As to obey theſe orders.
Edw. But they ſhall,
Shall be obey'd—I will enjoy my ſorrows,
All that is left me now.
Gloſt. The more thy grief,
Juſt in its cauſe but frantic in degree,
Seeks aggravating ſolitude, the more
It ſuits my love and duty to attend thee,
To try to ſoothe—
Edw. Away! thou never ſhalt.
Not all that idle wiſdom can ſuggeſt,
All the vain talk of proud unfeeling reaſon,
Shall rob me of one tear.
Gloſt. Of nature's tears
I would not rob thee: they invigorate virtue,
Soften, at once, and ſtrengthen the heart:
But when they riſe to ſpeak this deſperate language,
They then grow tears of weakneſs; yet——
Edw. I care not!
Weakneſs, whate'er they be, I will indulge them.
Will

Will, in deſpite of thee and all mankind,
Devote my joyleſs days for ever to them.

Gloſt. Reaſon and virtue then are empty names?

Edw. Hence! leave me to my fate—You have undone me?
You have made ſhipwreck of my peace, among you,
My happineſs and honour; and I now
Roam the deteſted world, a careleſs wretch!

Gloſt. Thy honour yet is ſafe, how long I know not,
For full it drives upon the rocks of paſſion.
O all ye pitying powers that rule mankind!
Who ſo unworthy but may proudly deck him.
With this fair-weather virtue, that exults,
Glad, o'er the ſummer main? The tempeſt comes,
The rough winds rage aloud; when from the helm
This virtue ſhrinks, and in a corner lyes
Lamenting.—Heavens! if privileg'd from trial,
How cheap a thing were virtue!

Edw. Do—inſult me—
Rail, ſpare me not——rail, Gloſter, all the world,—
But know, mean-time, thou canſt not make me feel thee——
I have no more connection with mankind.

Gloſt. Inſult thee, Edward! Do theſe tears inſult thee?
Theſe old man's tears!—Friendſhip, my prince, can weep,
As well as love—But while I weep thy fortune,
I can't not weep thy virtue ſunk beneath it—
Thou hast no more connection with mankind?

Put

Put off thy craving ſenſes, the deep wants
And infinite dependencies of nature;
Put off that ſtrongeſt paſſion of the ſoul,
Soul of the ſoul, love to ſociety;
Put off all gratitude for what is paſt,
All generous hope of what is yet to come;
Put off each ſenſe of honour and of duty:
Then uſe this language—Let me tell thee, Edward,
Thou haſt connections with mankind, and great ones,
Thou know'ſt not of; connections that might rouſe
The ſmalleſt ſpark of honour in thy breaſt,
To wide awaken'd life and fair ambition.

Edw. What doſt thou mean?

Gloſt. What mean?—this day, in England,
How many aſk of Paleſtine their king,
Edward their king?—Read theſe?

Edw. [*opening the diſpatches.*] O Gloſter!——
Gloſter!——
Alas! my royal father is no more!
The gentleſt of mankind, the moſt abus'd!
Of gracious nature, a fit ſoil for virtues,
'Till there his creatures ſow'd their flatt'ring lies,
And made him—No, not all their curſed arts
Could ever make him inſolent or cruel,
O my deluded father! Little joy
Hadſt thou in life, led from thy real good,
And genuine glory, from thy people's love,
That nobleſt aim of kings, by ſmiling traitors.
Thus weak of heart, thus deſolate of ſoul,
Ah, how unfit am I, with ſteady hand,

To rule a troubled ſtate!—She, ſhe is gone,
Soft'ner of care, the dear reward of toil,
The ſource of virtue! She, who to a crown
Had lent new ſplendor, who had grac'd a throne
Like the ſweet ſeraph mercy tempering juſtice.
O Eleonora! any life with thee,
The plaineſt could have charm'd: but pomp and pleaſure,
All that a loving people can beſtow,
By thee unſhar'd, will only ſerve to fret
The wounds of woe, and make me more unhappy!

Ghoſt. Now is the time, now lift thy ſoul to virtue!
Behold a criſis, ſent by Heaven, to ſave thee.
Whate'er, my prince, can touch, or can command,
Can quicken or exalt the heart of man,
Now ſpeaks to thine—Thy children claim their father,
Nay, more than father, claim their double parent;
For ſuch thy promiſe was to Eleonora:
Thy ſubjects claim their king, thy troops their chief;
The manes of thy anceſtors conſign
Their long deſcended glory to thy hands;
And thy dejected country calls upon thee
To ſave her, raiſe her, to reſtore her honour,
To ſpread her ſure dominion o'er the deep,
And bid her yet ariſe the ſcourge of France.
Angels themſelves might envy thee the joy
That waits thy will, in doing general good:
Of ſpreading virtue, cheering lonely worth;
Of daſhing down the proud; of guarding arts,
The ſacred rights of induſtry and freedom;
Of making a whole generous people happy.

O

O Edward! Edward! the moſt piercing tranſports
Of the beſt love can never equal theſe!
And need I add—Thy Eleonora's death
Calls out for vengeance—

Edw. Ha!

Gloſt. If thou, indeed,
Doſt honour thus her memory, then ſhew it,
Not by ſoft tears and womaniſh complaints,
But ſhew it like a man!

Edw. I will!

Gloſt. Yon towers!

Edw. It is true

Gloſt. Yon guilty towers!——

Edw. Inſult us ſtill!

Gloſt. The murderer of thy princeſs riots there!—

Edw. But ſhall not long!—Thou art my better genius,
Thou brave old man! thou haſt recall'd my virtue—
I was benumb'd with ſorrow—what—or where—
I know not—never to have thought of this.
Bright virtue, welcome! vigor of the mind!
The flame from heaven that lights up higher being!
Thrice welcome! with thy noble ſervant, anger,
And juſt revenge—Hence, let us to the camp,
And there transfuſe our ſoul into the troops.
The Sultan's blood will eaſe my fever'd breaſt.
Yes, I will take ſuch vengeance on this city,
That all mankind ſhall turn their eyes to Jaffa,
And as they ſee her turrets fall in duſt,
Shall learn to dread the arms of the [illegible]

End of the Fourth Act.

ACT V. SCENE I.

SELIM.

O My Daraxa! thou haſt charm'd my ſoul!
This reconciling interview has ſooth'd
My troubled boſom into tender joy;
As when the ſpring firſt, on the ſoften'd top
Of Lebanon, unbinds her lovely treſſes,
And ſhakes her blooming ſweets from Carmel's brow—
It only now remains to ſee the prince.——

SCENE II.

SELIM, THEALD.

Thea. I ſought thee, worthy derviſe.
Sel. Reverend Chriſtian,
My toiling thoughts can find no fix'd repoſe,
'Till the wrong'd Sultan's vindicated honour
Shine out as bright as yon unſully'd ſky.
Conduct me to the prince—I claim that juſtice—
It ſtings my conſcious ſoul with ſick impatience,
To think what pain, ſuffers. For a man,
Who loves the ways of truth and open virtue,

To

To lye beneath the burning imputation
Of baseness and of crimes—such horrid crimes!—
O 'tis a keen unsufferable torment!
Come, let me then discharge this other part
Of my commission.

Thea. That thou soon shalt do.
He strait will come this way, the king of England,
Such now he is. Mean-time, 'tis fit to tell thee,
He must be manag'd gently; for his passions
Are all abroad, in wild confusion hurl'd:
The winds, the floods, and light'ning mix together.
I need not say how little, in this uproar,
Avails the broken thwarted light of reason.

Sel. Fear not.—I trust in innocence and truth.

Thea. He cannot long delay; for, as I enter'd,
I saw him parting from the hurried camp,
That light'ned wide around him: burnish'd helms
And glittering spears, and ardent thronging soldiers,
Demanding all the signal, when to storm
These walls devoted to their vengeance.——

Sel. Ha!
Then let us quickly find him—But he comes.

SCENE III

SELIM, THEALD, EDWARD, GLOSTER.

Edw. Whence is it those barbarians, here again,
Those base, those murdering cow[illegible] seen?
What new [illegible] attempt is now on [illegible]

Wh[illegible]

What now aſſaſſination?——Start not, derviſe,
Tinge not thy caitiff cheek with red'ning honour.
What, thou!—Doſt thou pretend to feel reproach?
Art thou not of a ſhameleſs race of people,
Harden'd in arts of cruelty and blood,
Perfidious all? Yes, have you not profau'd
The faith of nations? broke the holy tie
That binds the families of earth together,
That gives even foes to meet with generous truſt,
And teaches war ſecurity? Your prince,
Your prince has done it! And you ſhould hereafter
Be hunted from your dens like ſavage beaſts,
Be cruſh'd like ſerpents!

Thea. Sir, this derviſe comes,
To clear the Sultan Selim from that crime
Which you, with ſtrong appearance, charge upon him.

Edw. Appearance, Theald! with unqueſtion'd proof.
Doubtleſs the villain would be glad to change
The courſe by nature fix'd, enjoy his crimes
Without their evil—But he ſhall not 'ſcape [illegible]

Sel. If, king of England, in this weighty [illegible]
On which depends the weal and life of thouſands,
You love and ſeek the truth, let reaſon judge,
Cool, ſteady, quiet, and diſpaſſion'd reaſon.
For never yet, ſince the proud ſelfiſh race
[illegible] began to jar, did paſſion give,
Nor ever [illegible] give, a right deciſion.

Edw. [illegible] judg'd, and paſſion ſhall [illegible]

Shall make you howl, ye cowards of the east!
What can be clearer? This vile prince of Jaffa!
This infamy of princes! ſends a ruffian,
By his own hand and ſeal commiſſion'd, ſends him,
To treat of peace: and, as I read his letters,
The villain ſtabs me—This, if this wants light,
There is no certainty in human reaſon;
If this not ſhines with all convincing truth,
Yon ſun is dark—And yet theſe cowards come
With lying ſhifts, and low eluſive arts—
O it inflames my anger into madneſs!
This added inſult on our underſtanding,
This treacherous attempt to ſteal away
The only joy and treaſure of my life,
Sweet ſacred vengeance for my murder'd princeſs.

Sel. The curſed wretch who did aſſail thy life,
O King of England, was indeed an envoy
Sent by the prince of Jaffa: This we own.
But then he was an execrable bigot,
Who, for ſuch horrid purpoſes, had crept
Into the cheated Sultan's court and ſervice,
As by the traitor's papers we have learn'd.
For know, there lives, upon the craggy cliffs
Of wild Phenician mountains, a dire race,
A nation of aſſaſſins. Dreadful zeal,
Fierce and intolerant of all religion
That differs from their own, is the black ſoul
Of that infernal ſtate. Soon as their chief,
The old man (ſo they ſtile him) of the mountains,
Gives out his baleful will, however ill,

However

However wicked and abhorr'd it be,
Tho' cloth'd in danger, the moſt cruel death,
They, ſwift and ſilent, glide thro' every land,
As fly the gloomy miniſters of vengeance,
Famine and plague; they ly for years conceal'd,
Make light of oaths, nay, ſometimes change religion,
And never fail to execute his orders.
Of theſe the villain was, theſe ruſſian-ſaints,
The curſe of earth, the terror of mankind:
And thy engagement, prince, in this cruſado,
That was the reaſon whence they ſought thy life.

Edw. Falſe, falſe as hell! the lye of guilty fear!
You all are bigots, robbers, ruffians all!
It is the very genius of your nation.
Vindictive rage, the thirſt of blood conſumes you;
You live by rapine, thence your empire roſe;
And your religion is a mere pretence
To rob and murder in the name of Heaven.

Sol. Be patient, prince, be more humane and juſt.
You have your virtues, have your vices too;
And we have ours. The liberal hand of Nature
Has not created us, nor any nation,
Beneath the bleſſed canopy of Heaven,
Of ſuch malignant clay, but each may boaſt
Their native virtues, and their Maker's bounty.
You call us bigots.—O! canſt thou with that
Reproach us, Chriſtian prince? What brought thee
hither?
What elſe, but bigotry? What doſt thou here?
What elſe but to execute?—The reaſon is great,

Greater than thou, and I will give it way;
Even thou thyself, in all thy rage, will hear it—
From their remotest source, these holy wars,
What have they breath'd but bigotry and rapine?
Did not the first *Crusaders*, when their zeal
Sould have shone out the purest, did they not,
Led by the frantic hermit who began
The murderous trade, thro' their own countries spread
The woes their vice could not reserve for ours?
Tho' this exceeds the purport of my message;
Yet must I, thus insulted in my country,
Insulted in religion, bid thee think,
O King of England, on the different conduct
Of Saracens and Christians, when beneath
Your pious Godfrey, in the first crusado,
Jerusalem was sack'd, and when beneath
Our generous Saladin it was retaken——
O hideous scene! my soul within me shrinks,
Abhorrent from the view!—twelve thousand wretches
Recev'd to mercy, void of all defence,
Trusting to plighted faith, to purchas'd safety,
Behold these naked wretches, in cold blood,
Men, women, children, murder'd, basely murder'd,
The holy temple which you came to rescue,
Regorges with the barbarous profanation.
The streets run dismal torrents of Drown'd in blood,
The very soldier sickens at his [illegible]
Couldst thou, O sun, behold [illegible] sight,
And lift again thy sacred eye on mortals!
A ruthless race! Who can [illegible] this, can do it,

To

To pleaſe the general Father of mankind!
While nobler Saladin——
Edw. Away! be gone!
With thee, vile derviſe, what have I to do?
I loſe my hour of vengeance, I debaſe me,
To hold this talk with thee.
Sel. While truth and reaſon
Speak from my tongue, vile derviſe as I am,
Yet am I greater than the higheſt monarch,
Who, from blind fury, grows the ſlave of paſſion.
Beſides, I come to juſtify a prince,
Howe'er in other qualities below thee,
In love of goodneſs, truth, humanity,
And honour, Sir, thy equal;—yes, thy equal!—
Edw. What? how? compare me with a damn'd
aſſaſſin?
A matchleſs villain!—Ha! preſumptuous derviſe!
Thou gnaw'ſt thy quiv'ring lip—A ſmother'd paſſion,
Shakes thro' thy frame.—What villainy is that
Thou dar'ſt not utter?—Wert thou not a wretch,
Protected by thy habit, this right hand
Should cruſh thee into atoms—Hence! away!
Go tell thy maſter that I hold him baſe,
Beyond the power of words to ſpeak his baſeneſs!
A coward! an aſſaſſinating coward!
And when I once have dragg'd him from his city,
Which I will do it may do—I [illegible] will make him,
In all the gall and [illegible]erneſs of guilt,
Grinding the vengeful ſteel betwixt his teeth,
Will make the traitor own it.

Sel. [*Diſcovering himſelf.*] Never!

Edw. Ha!

Sel. Thou canſt not, haughty monarch!—I am he!
I am this Selim! this inſulted Selim!
Yet clear as day, and will confound thy paſſion.

Edw. Thou Selim!

Sel. I.

Edw. Was ever guilt ſo bold?

Sel. Did ever innocence deſcend to fear?

Edw. This bears ſome ſhew of honour. Wilt thou then,
Decide it by the ſword?

Sel. I will do more——

Edw. How more?

Sel. Decide it by ſuperior reaſon.

Edw. No weak evaſions!

Sel. If I not convince thee,
If by thyſelf I am not of this crime
Acquitted, then I grant thee thy demand.
Nay more, yon yielded city ſhall be thine:
For know, hot prince, I ſhould diſdain a throne,
I could not fill with honour. Were I guilty,
I ſhould not tremble at the threat'ning voice;
No, 'tis myſelf I fear.

Edw. What ſhall I think?

Sel. Hear but one witneſs, and I aſk no more,
To clear my name, [illegible]
Her looks are truth, [illegible]
Beams from her eyes. [illegible] doubt ſuch beauty;

For 'tis th' expreſſion of a ſpotleſs ſoul.

Edw. Curſe on thy mean luxurious eaſtern arts
Of cowardice! Thou would'ſt ſeduce my vengeance—
But I deteſt all beauty—Barbarous Sultan!
Ah! thou haſt murder'd beauty! thy fell crime—
Haſte, Gloſter, haſte—In ſight of camp and city,
Prepare the liſts—Now ſhow thyſelf a prince,
Or die in ſhameful tortures like a ſlave.

Sel. I came not hither or to dread thy wrath,
Or court thy mercy.

Gloſt. Sir, you cannot juſtly
Refuſe him his demand. The fervent ſoul
Of undiſſembled innocence, methinks,
Is felt in what he ſays. Firſt hear this perſon;
And if ſhe gives not full conviction, then,
Have then recourſe to what ſhould always be
The laſt appeal of reaſonable beings,
Brute-force.

Edw. Well then, conduct her hither, Sultan.——

[*Selim goes out.*

Ah! my diſorder'd mind! from thought to thought,
Uncertain, toſs'd, the wreck of ſtormy paſſion!
This rage a while ſupports me; but I feel
It will deſert me ſoon, and I again
Shall ſoon relapſe to miſery and weakneſs.
O Eleonora! little didſt thou think,
How deeply wretched thy diſaſtrous life,
Would make me!

SCENE

SCENE IV.

EDWARD, GLOSTER, THEALD; *to them* SELIM *conducting* ELEONORA, DARAXA.

Sel. Raiſe thy eyes, O King of England,
To the bright witneſs of my blameleſs honour.

Edw. No; beauty ſhall no more engage my eyes,
It ſhall no more profane the ſhrine devoted
To the ſweet image of my Eleonora!
Let her declare her knowledge in this matter.

Eleon. Will not my Edward bleſs me with a look?

Edw. What angel borrows Eleonora's voice——
O thou pale ſhade of her I weep for ever!
Permit me thus to worſhip thee—Thou art!
Amazing Heav'n!—Thou art my Eleonora!
My Eleonora's ſelf; my dear, my true,
My living Eleonora!—What—to whom
Owe I this miracle? this better life?—
Oppreſſive joy!—owe I my Eleonora?

Eleon. To him, that generous prince, who put his life,
His honour on the deſperate riſque to ſave me,
When in the arms of death—Depriv'd of voice,
Of motion, and of ſenſe, benumb'd I lay,
My frighted train around me thought me dead,
And ſol'd the tent with cries; my heart alone
Still feebly beat; but upon the poiſon's force
Had driven out life from th[illegible] retreat;
If in the moment of approaching fate,

He, like my guardian-angel, had not brought
An antidote of wond'rous power, by which
I am to light reſtor'd—to thee, my Edward!

Edw. Did he, did he preſerve thee! He, whom thus
I have with ſuch inhuman pride inſulted!
O blind, O brutiſh, O injurious rage!
They, they are wiſe, who, when they feel thy madneſs,
Seal up their lips. And canſt thou then forgive me,
Thou who haſt o'er me gain'd that nobleſt triumph,
The triumph of humanity?———Thou canſt.
'Tis eaſier for the generous to forgive
Than for offence to aſk it.

Sel. Uſe not, prince,
So harſh a word. More than forgive, I love
Thy noble heat, thy beautiful diſorder.
O! I am too much man, I feel, myſelf,
Too much the charming force of human paſſions,
E'er to pretend, with ſupercilious brow,
With proud affected virtue, to diſdain them.

Edw. How? generous Sultan, how ſhall I requite thee?
Here—Take thy lov'd Daraxa, whom I meant
To have reſtor'd, when this misfortune happen'd;
But ſecret-working Heav'n ordain'd her ſtay
To ſave us all.

Sel. Wert thou the lord of [illegible],
Thou could'ſt not give me [illegible]!—my dear Daraxa!

Edw. Hence [illegible] camp, my Gloſte——Bid the ſoldiers

Forſake

Forſake the trenches—Let unbounded joy
Reign, fearleſs, o'er the mingled camp and city—
Go, tell my faithful ſoldiers, that their queen
My Eleonora lives! A prize beyond
The chance of war to give! She lives to ſoften
My too imperious temper, and to make them,
To make my people happy!—O my ſoul!
What love e'er equal'd thine? O deareſt! beſt!
Pride of thy ſex! inimitable goodneſs!
Whenever woman henceforth ſhall be prais'd
For conjugal affection, men will ſay,
"There ſhine the virtues of an Eleonora!"
Tranſporting bliſs!—How bountiful is Heaven!
Depreſſing often, but to raiſe us more.
Let never thoſe deſpair who follow virtue.
Love—gratitude—divide me—Once more, Sultan,
Forgive me, pardon my miſtaken zeal,
That left my country, croſs'd the ſtormy ſeas,
To war with thee, brave prince, to war with honour.
Now that my paſſions give me leave to think;
The hand of Heaven appears in what I ſuffer'd,
My erring zeal has ſuffer'd by a zealot.

Sel. It does, O King. And venerable Chriſtian,
I know thy moderation will excuſe me.
But ſince by ruling Wiſdom (who unweigh'd
Unmeant, does nought) men are ſo various made,
So various turn'd, that in opinions, they
Muſt blindly think, or take a different way;
In ſpite of force, ſince judgment will be free:
Then let us in this righteous Ottan age

Let holy rage, let perſecution ceaſe:
Let the head argue, but the heart be peace;
Let all mankind in love of what is right,
In virtue and humanity unite.

End of the Fifth Act.

EPILOGUE.

By a FRIEND.

THESE Poets are ſuch fools!—The man behind,
Who wrote this play—a ſimple ſoul, I find,——
Believes with all his heart, there was a wife,
Who needs would die—to ſave a husband's life!
He in the printed chronicles has read it;
And true it is——Sir Richard Baker ſaid it.
Why, what an aſs theſe books do make a man?
Read Nature——then believe it—you who can.
Look round this town—the queſtion is not—whether
Spouſe dies *for ſpouſe: but, who will* live *together?*
Of old, they ſay, a huſband was a lover:
But, thank our ſtars! thoſe fooliſh days are over:
To ſuch ſubſtantial prudence are we come,
We [illegible] not heart to heart—but, plumb to plumb.
[illegible] what beauty? are not now th[illegible]
But [illegible] be ſettle—up to what ſhe bring[illegible]
[illegible] eaſy, [illegible] forgiving ag[illegible]
[illegible]—on [illegible]
[illegible] too, there may be ſome gentl[illegible] ſoul,
[illegible] weep—than win [illegible]
[illegible] are charms in generous [illegible]
And [illegible] Eleanora pro[illegible]

TANCRED and SIGISMUNDA.

A TRAGEDY.

TO HIS

ROYAL HIGHNESS

FREDERICK

PRINCE OF WALES.

SIR,

THE honour your ROYAL HIGHNESS has done me in the protection you was pleased to give to this tragedy, emboldens me to lay it now at your feet, and beg leave to publish it under your royal patronage. The favouring and protecting of letters has

been, in all ages and countries, one diſtinguiſhing mark of a great prince; and that with good reaſon, not only as it ſhews a juſtneſs of taſte, and elevation of mind, but as the influence of ſuch a protection, by exciting good writers to labour with more emulation in the improvement of their ſeveral talents, not a little contributes to the embelliſhment and inſtruction of ſociety. But of all the different ſpecies of writing, none has ſuch an effect upon the lives and manners of men as the dramatic; and therefore that, of all others, moſt deſerves the attention of princes, who, by a judicious approbation of ſuch pieces as tend to promote all public and private virtue, may more than by any coercive methods ſecure the purity of the ſtage, and, in conſequence thereof, greatly advance the morals and politeneſs of their people.

eminently your ROYAL HIGHNESS has always extended your favour and patronage to every art and ſcience, and in a particular manner to dramatic performances, is too well known to the world for me to mention it here. Allow me only to wiſh, that what I have now the honour to offer to your ROYAL HIGHNESS, may be judged not unworthy of your protection, at leaſt in the *Sentiments* which it inculcates. A warm and grateful ſenſe of your goodneſs to me makes me deſirous to ſeize every occaſion of declaring in public, with what profound reſpect and dutiful attachment, I am, SIR,

Your ROYAL HIGHNESS's

Moſt obliged, moſt obedient,

and moſt devoted Servant,

JAMES THOMSON.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THIS play is conſiderably ſhortened in the performance; but I hope it will not be diſagreeable to the reader to ſee it as it was at firſt written; there being a great difference betwixt a play in the cloſet, and upon the ſtage.

PROLOGUE.

BOLD is the man! who, in this nicer age,
Presumes to tread the chaste corrected stage.
Now, with gay tinsel-arts, we can no more
Conceal the want of Nature's sterling-ore.
Our spells are vanish'd, broke our magic wand,
That us'd to waft you over sea and land.
Before your light the fairy people fade,
The demons fly—The ghost itself is laid.
In vain of martial scenes the loud alarms,
The mighty prompter thund'ring out to arms,
The play-house posse clattering from afar,
The close-wedg'd battle, and the din of war.
Now even the senate seldom we convene;
The yawning fathers nod behind the scene.
Your taste rejects the glittering false sublime,
To sigh in metaphor, and die in rhime.
High [illegible] tumbled from his gallery-throne;
Description, dreams—[illegible] similes are gone.
What [illegible] we [illegible] to please you how devise
[illegible] in your [illegible]

Thrice

Thrice happy! could we catch great Shakeſpear's art,
To trace the deep receſſes of the heart;
His ſimple plain ſublime, to which is given
To ſtrike the ſoul with darted flame from heaven:
Could we awake ſoft Otway's tender woe,
The pomp of verſe and golden lines of Rowe.
We to your hearts apply: let them attend;
Before their ſilent candid bar we bend.
If warm'd they liſten, 'tis our nobleſt praiſe;
If cold, they wither all the muſe's bays.

The

The PERSONS.

TANCRED, Count of Leece,	Mr. Garrick.
MATTEO SIFFREDI, Lord high chancellor of Sicily,	Mr. Sheridan.
Earl OSMOND, Lord high conſtable of Sicily,	Mr. Delane.
RODOLPHO, friend to TANCRED, and captain of the guards,	Mr. Havard.
SIGISMUNDA, daughter of SIFFREDI,	Mrs. Cibber.
LAURA, ſiſter of RODOLPHO, and friend to SIGISMUNDA,	Miſs Budgel.

Barons, Officers, Guards, &c.

SCENE, the city of Palermo in Sicily.

TAN-

TANCRED and SIGISMUNDA.

A TRAGEDY.

ACT I. SCENE I.

SIGISMUNDA, LAURA.

Laur. AH fatal day to Sicily! The king
Approaches his last moments?
Sigif. So 'tis fear'd.
Laur. The death of those distinguish'd by their sta-
tion
But by their [illegible] more, awakes the mind
To solemn dread, and [illegible] awe;
Not [illegible]
[illegible]—And yet the [illegible]

Are

Are, by the playful children of this world,
At once forgot, as they had never been.

Sigif. 'Tis ſaid—The heart is ſometimes charg'd
With a prophetic ſadneſs: ſuch, methinks,
Now hangs on mine. The king's approaching death
Suggeſts a thouſand fears. What troubles thence
May throw the ſtate once more into confuſion,
What ſudden changes in my father's houſe
May riſe, and part me from my deareſt Tancred,
Alarms my thought.

Laur. The fears of love-ſick fancy!
Perverſely buſy to torment itſelf.
But be aſſur'd your father's ſteady friendſhip.
Join'd to a certain genius, that commands,
Not kneels to fortune, will ſupport and cheriſh,
Here in the public eye of Sicily,
This—I may call him—his adopted ſon,
The noble Tancred, form'd to all his virtues.

Sigif. Ah form'd to charm his daughter!——This fair morn
Has tempted for the chace. Is he not yet
Return'd?

Laur. No.——When your father to the king,
Who now expiring lies, was call'd in haſte,
He ſent each way his meſſengers to find him;
With ſuch a look of ardor and impatience,
As if this [illegible] event
Of more importance [illegible]

Sigif. There [illegible]

A cloud I cannot pierce. With princely accoſt,
Nay, with reſpect, which oft I have obſerv'd,
Stealing at times ſubmiſſive o'er his features,
In Belmont's woods my father rear'd this youth——
Ah woods! where firſt my artleſs boſom learn'd
The ſighs of love.—He gives him out the ſon
Of an old friend, a baron of Apulia,
Who in the late cruſado bravely fell.
But then 'tis ſtrange; is all his family,
As well as father, dead? and all their friends,
Except my ſire, the generous good Siffredi?
Had he a mother, ſiſter, brother left,
The laſt remain of kindred; with what pride,
What rapture, might they fly o'er earth and ſea,
To claim this riſing honour of their blood!
This bright unknown! this all-accompliſh'd youth!
Who charms—too much—the heart of Sigiſmunda!
Laura, perhaps your brother knows him better,
The friend and partner of his freeſt hours
What ſays Rodolpho! Does he truly credit
This ſtory of his birth?

Laur. He has ſometimes,
Like you, his doubts; yet, when maturely weigh'd,
Believes it true. As for Lord Tancred's ſelf,
He never [illegible] the ſlightest thought
That verg'd [illegible] doubt; but oft [illegible] his ſtate,
By cruel fortune [illegible] pair'd [illegible] yours.

[illegible] Men [illegible] the [illegible] of the mind,
[illegible] brother, Laura,
[illegible]

Laur. Of nothing elſe. Howe'er
The talk begin, it ends with Sigiſmunda.
Their morning, noontide, and their evening walks
Are full of you; and all the woods of Belmont
Enamour'd with your name—
Sigiſ. Away, my friend;
You flatter—yet the dear deluſion charms.
Laur. No, Sigiſmunda, 'tis the ſtricteſt truth,
Nor half the truth, I tell you. Even with fondneſs,
My brother talks for ever of the paſſion [him,
That fires young Tancred's breaſt. So much it ſtrikes
He praiſes love as if he were a lover.
He blames the falſe purſuits of vagrant youth,
Calls them gay folly, a miſtaken ſtruggle
Againſt beſt-judging nature. Heaven, he ſays,
In laviſh bounty form'd the heart for love;
In love included all the finer ſeeds
Of honour, virtue, friendſhip, pureſt bliſs.
Sigiſ. Virtuous Rodolpho!
Laur. Then his pleaſing theme
He varies to the praiſes of your lover—
Sigiſ. And what, my Laura, ſays he on the ſubject?
Laur. He ſays that, tho' he were not nobly born,
Nature has form'd him noble, [illegible] brave,
Truly magnanimous, and warm [illegible]
Whatever [illegible] the ſmalleſt taint [illegible]
That every eaſy virtue [illegible] his own;
Not learnt by painful [illegible]
[illegible] Chiefly one [illegible]
He in his [illegible] obſerves [illegible]

[illegible] That

That though his paſſions burn with high impatience,
And ſometimes, from a noble heat of nature,
Are ready to fly off; yet the leaſt check
Of ruling reaſon brings them back to temper,
And gentle ſoftneſs.

Sigiſ. True! O true, Rodolpho!
Bleſt be thy kindred worth for loving his!
He is all warmth, all amiable fire,
All quick heroic ardor! temper'd ſoft
With gentleneſs of heart, and manly reaſon!
If virtue were to wear a human form,
To light it with her dignity and flame,
Then ſoft'ning mix her ſmiles and tender graces;
O ſhe would chuſe the perſon of my Fancred!
Go on, my friend, go on, and ever praiſe him;
The ſubject knows no bounds, nor can I tire,
While my breaſt trembles to that ſweeteſt muſic!
The heart of woman taſtes no truer joy,
Is never flatter'd with ſuch dear enchantment——
'Tis more than ſelfiſh vanity—as when
She hears the praiſes of the man ſhe loves——

Laur. Madam, your father comes.

SCENE II.

SIGISMUNDA, LAURA.

Lord Fancred

Att. My lord, he quickly will be here.
I ſcarce could keep before him, tho' he bid me
Speed on, to ſay he would attend your orders.
Siff. 'Tis well—Retire—You, too, my daughter, leave me.
Sigiſ. I go, my father—But how fares the king?
Siff. He is no more. Gone to that awful ſtate,
Where kings the crown wear only of their virtues.
Sigiſ. How bright muſt then be his!—This ſtroke is ſudden.
He was this morning well, when to the chace
Lord Tancred went.
Siff. 'Tis true. But at his years
Death gives ſhort notice—Drooping nature then,
Without a guſt of pain to ſhake it, falls.
His death, my daughter, was that happy period
Which few attain. The duties of his day
Were all diſcharg'd, and gratefully enjoy'd
Its nobleſt bleſſings; calm, as evening-ſkies,
Was his pure mind, and lighted up with hopes
That open heaven; when, for his laſt long ſleep
Timely prepar'd, a laſſitude of life,
A pleaſing wearineſs of mortal joy,
Fell on his ſoul, and down he ſunk to reſt.
O may my death be ſuch!—He but one wiſh
Left unfulfill'd, which was to ſee Count Tancred—
Sigiſ. To ſee Count Tancred!—[illegible]
[illegible]
Siff. [illegible]

Why did you ſtart at mention of Count Tancred?

Sigiſ. Nothing—I only hop'd the dying king
Might mean to make ſome generous juſt proviſion
For this your worthy charge, this noble orphan.

Siff. And he has done it largely—Leave me now—
I want ſome private conference with Lord Tancred.

SCENE III.

SIFFREDI *alone.*

My doubts are but too true—If theſe old eyes
Can trace the marks of love, a mutual paſſion
Has ſeiz'd, I fear, my daughter and this prince,
My ſovereign now—Should it be ſo? Ah there,
There lurks a brooding tempeſt, that may ſhake
My long-concerted ſcheme, to ſettle firm
The public peace and welfare, which the king
Has made the prudent baſis of his will——
Away! unworthy views! you ſhall not tempt me!
Nor intereſt, nor ambition ſhall ſeduce
My fixt reſolve——periſh the ſelfiſh thought,
Which our own good prefers to that of millions!
He comes—my king—unconſcious of his fortune.

SCENE IV.

TANCRED, SIFFREDI.

From tongue to tongue—We then, at laſt, have loſt
The good old king?

Siff. Yes, we have loſt a father!
The greateſt bleſſing heaven beſtows on mortals,
And ſeldom found amidſt theſe wilds of time.
A good, a worthy king!—Hear me, my Tancred,
And I will tell thee, in a few plain words,
How he deſerv'd that beſt, that glorious title.
'Tis nought complex, 'tis clear as truth and virtue.
He lov'd his people, deem'd them all his children;
The good exalted, and depreſs'd the bad.
He ſpurn'd the flatt'ring crew, with ſcorn rejected
Their ſmooth advice that only means themſelves,
Their ſchemes to aggrandize him into baſeneſs:
Nor did he leſs diſdain the ſecret breath,
The whiſper'd tale, that blights a virtuous name.
He ſought alone the good of thoſe for whom
He was intruſted with the ſovereign power:
Well knowing that a people, in their rights
And induſtry protected, living ſafe
Beneath the ſacred ſhelter of the laws,
Encourag'd in their genius, arts, and labours,
And happy each as he himſelf deſerves,
Are ne'er ungrateful. With unſparing hand,
They will for him provide: their filial [illegible]
And confidence are his unfailing treaſure,
And every [illegible] man his faithful [illegible].

Tanc. A general [illegible] of [illegible] ſpread [illegible] city.
I mark'd the people, as I [illegible]
In crowds [illegible], ſtruck [illegible]

And

And pouring forth the nobleſt praiſe of tears,
Thoſe, whom remembrance of their former woes,
And long experience of the vain illuſions
Of youthful hope, had into wiſe conſent
And fear of change corrected, wrung their hands,
And often caſting up their eyes to heaven,
Gave ſign of ſad conjecture. Others ſhew'd,
Athwart their grief, or real or affected,
A gleam of expectation, from what chance
And change might bring. A mingled murmur run
Along the ſtreets; and from the lonely court
Of him who can no more aſſiſt their fortunes,
I ſaw the courtier-fry, with eager haſte,
All hurrying to Conſtantia.

Siff. Noble youth!
I joy to hear from thee theſe juſt reflections,
Worthy of riper years—But if they ſeek
Conſtantia, truſt me, they miſtake their courſe.

Tanc. How! Is ſhe not, my lord, the late king's ſiſter,
Heir to the crown of Sicily? the laſt
Of our fam'd Norman line, and now our queen?

Siff. Tancred, 'tis true; ſhe is the late king's ſiſter,
The ſole ſurviving offspring of that tyrant
William the bad—ſo for his vices ſtiled;
Who ſpilt [illegible] noble blood, and ſore oppreſs'd
Th' exhauſted land [illegible] grievous war aroſe,
[illegible] diſſion ſhook the ſtate,
[illegible] Sicilia mourns to-day,

William,

William, who has and well deserv'd the name
Of *Good*, succeeding to his father's throne,
Reliev'd his country's woes——But to return——
She is the late king's sister, born some months
After the tyrant's death, but not next heir.

Tanc. You much surprise me——May I then presume
To ask who is?

Siff. Come nearer noble Tancred,
Son of my care! I must on this occasion,
Consult thy generous heart; which, when conducted
By rectitude of mind and honest virtues,
Gives better counsel than the hoary head——
Then know, there lives a prince, here in Palermo,
The lineal offspring of our famous hero,
Roger the First.

Tanc. Great heaven! How far remov'd
From that our mighty founder?

Siff. His great grandson:
Sprung from his eldest son, who died untimely,
Before his father.

Tanc. Ha! the prince you mean
Is he of Manfred's son? The generous, brave,
Unhappy Manfred! whom the tyrant Will
You just now mention'd, not content to
O
A

Yet rears its head; and ſhall not from the lance,
Paſs to the feeble diſtaff——But this prince
Where has he lain conceal'd?

Siff. The late good king,
By noble pity mov'd, contriv'd to ſave him
From his dire father's unrelenting rage;
And had him rear'd in private, as became
His birth and hopes, with high and princely nurture.
Till now, too young to rule a troubled ſtate,
By civil broils moſt miſerably torn,
He in his ſafe retreat has lain conceal'd,
His birth and fortune to himſelf unknown;
But when the dying king to me entruſted,
As to the chancellor of the realm, his will,
His ſucceſſor he named him!

Tanc. Happy youth!
He then will triumph o'er his father's foes,
O'er haughty Oſmond, and the tyrant's daughter.

Siff. Ay, that is what I dread—that heat of youth;
There lurks, I fear, perdition to the ſtate;
I dread the horrors of rekindled war:
Tho' dead, the tyrant ſtill is to be fear'd;
His daughter's party ſtill is ſtrong and numerous
Yet [illegible]d Earl Oſmond, conſtable of Sicily,
Experienc'd, brave, high-born, of mighty intereſt
[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]

If by myſelf I of this prince may judge,
That ſcheme will ſcarce ſucceed— Your prudent age
In vain will counſel, if the heart forbid it—
But wherefore fear? The right is clearly his:
And, under your direction, with each man
Of worth, and ſtedfaſt loyalty, to back
At once the king's appointment and his birthright,
There is no ground for fear. They have great odds
Againſt th' aſtoniſh'd ſons of violence,
Who fight with awful juſtice on their ſide.
All Sicily will rouſe, all faithful hearts
Will range themſelves around Prince Manfred's ſon.
For me, I here devote me to the ſervice
Of this young prince; I every drop of blood
Will loſe with joy, with tranſport in his cauſe——
Pardon my warmth—but that, my lord, will never
To this deciſion come—Then find the prince;
Loſe not a moment to awaken in him
The royal ſoul. Perhaps he now deſponding
Pines in a corner and laments his fortune;
That in the narrower bounds of private life
He muſt confine his aims, thoſe ſwelling virtues
Which from his noble father he inherits.

Siff. Perhaps, regardleſs, in the common bane
Of youth he melts in vanity and love.
But if the ſeeds of virtue glow within him,
I will awake a higher ſenſe, a love
That graſps the loves and happineſs of nations.

Tanc. Why that ſurmiſe? Or, ſhould [illegible] love,
Siffredi,
I doubt not, [illegible] nobly, which will raiſe

And

And animate his virtues—O permit me,
To plead the cauſe of youth—Their virtue oft,
In pleaſure's ſoft inchantment lull'd a while,
Forgets itſelf; it ſleeps and gayly dreams,
Till great occaſion rouſe it: then all flame,
It walks abroad, with heighten'd ſoul and vigor,
And by the change aſtoniſhes the world.
Even with a kind of ſympathy, I feel
The joy that waits this prince; when all the powers,
Th' expanding heart can wiſh, of doing good
Whatever ſwells ambition, or exalts
The human ſoul into divine emotions,
All croud at once upon him.

Siff. Ah, my Tancred,
Nothing ſo eaſy as in ſpeculation,
And at a diſtance ſeen the courſe of honour,
A fair delightful champain ſtrew'd with flowers.
But when the practice comes; when our fond paſſions,
Pleaſure, and pride, and ſelf indulgence, throw
Their magic duſt around, the proſpect roughens:
Then dreadful paſſes, craggy mountains riſe,
Cliffs to be ſcal'd, and torrents to be ſtem'd:
Then toil enſues, and perſeverance ſtern:
And endleſs combats with our groſſer ſenſe,
Oft loſt, and oft renew'd; and generous pain
For others ſelf; and, harder leſſon ſtill!
Our honeſt [illegible] for others ſacrific'd!
And all the rugged talk of virtue quails
Th[illegible] heart of common reſolution.
Few [illegible] this turn [illegible]

Few gain the ſummit, breathe that pureſt air,
That heavenly æther, which untroubled ſees
The ſtorm of vice and paſſion rage below.

Tanc. Moſt true, my lord, but why thus augure ill?

You ſeem to doubt this prince. I know him not—
Yet oh, methinks, my heart could anſwer for him!
The juncture is ſo high, ſo ſtrong the gale
That blows from heaven, as thro' the deadeſt ſoul
Might breathe the godlike energy of virtue.

Siff. Hear him, immortal ſhades of his great fathers!——
Forgive me, Sir, this trial of your heart:
Thou! thou art he!

Tanc. Siffredi!

Siff. Tancred, thou!
Thou art the man, of all the many thouſands
That toil upon the boſom of this iſle,
By Heaven elected to command the reſt,
To rule, protect them, and to make them happy!

Tanc. Manfred my father! I the laſt ſupport
Of the fam'd Norman line, that awes the world!
I! who this morning wander'd forth an orphan,
Outcaſt of all but thee, my ſecond father!
Thus call'd to glory! to the firſt [illegible]
Of human kind!—O wonder-working hand,
That, in majeſtic ſilence, ſways at will
The mighty movements of unbounded nature,
O grant me, Heaven, the virtues to fulfil
This awful [illegible] of [illegible] by heroes!

Let me not be exalted into ſhame,
Set up the worthleſs pageant of vain grandeur.
Mean-time, I thank the juſtice of the king,
Who has my right bequeath'd me. Thee, Siffredi,
I thank thee—O I ne'er enough can thank thee!
Yes, thou haſt been—thou art—ſhalt be my father!
Thou ſhalt direct my unexperienc'd years,
Shalt be the ruling head, and I thee hand.

Siff. It is enough for me—to ſee my ſovereign
Aſſert his virtues, and maintain his honour.

Tanc. I think, my Lord, you ſaid the king committed
To you his will. I hope it is not clogg'd
With any baſe conditions, any clauſe,
To tyrannize my heart, and to Conſtantia
Enſlave my hand devoted to another.
The hint you juſt now gave of that alliance,
You muſt imagine, wakes my fear. But know,
In this alone I will not bear diſpute,
Not even from thee, Siffredi!—Let the council
Be ſtrait aſſembled, and the will there open'd:
Thence iſſue ſpeedy orders to convene,
This day ere noon, the ſenate: where thoſe barons,
Who now are in Palermo, will attend
To pay their ready homage to the king,
Their rightful king, who claims his native crown,
And will not be a king by deeds and parchments.

Siff. I go, my liege. [illegible] again permit me
To tell you——Now, now, is the [illegible],
That muſt determine of [illegible] high.

O with heroic rigor watch your heart!
And to the ſovereign duties of a king,
Th' unequal pleaſures of a GOD on earth,
Submit the common joys, the common paſſions,
Nay, even the virtues of the private man.

Tanc. Of that no more. They not oppoſe, but aid,
Invigorate, cheriſh, and reward each other.
The kind all-ruling Wiſdom is no tyrant.

SCENE V.

TANCRED *alone.*

Now, generous Sigiſmunda, comes my turn.
To ſhew my love was not of thine unworthy,
When fortune bade me bluſh to look to thee.
But what is fortune to the wiſh of love?
A miſerable bankrupt! O 'tis poor
'Tis ſcanty all, whate'er we can beſtow!
The wealth of kings is wretchedneſs and want!—
Quick let me find her! taſte that higheſt joy,
All' exalted heart can know, the mixt effuſion
Of gratitude and love!—Behold, ſhe comes!

SCENE VI.

TANCRED, SIGISMUNDA.

Tanc. My flutter[illegible] was all on wing to find
Thee,
My love! my Sigiſmunda!

Sigiſ.

Sigif. O my Tancred!
Tell me, what means this myſtery and gloom
That low'rs around. Juſt now involv'd in thought
Thy father ſhot athwart me—You, my lord,
Seem ſtrangely mov'd——I fear ſome dark event
From the king's death to trouble our repoſe,
That tender calm we in the woods of Belmont
So happily enjoy'd——Explain this hurry,
What means it? Say,

Tanc. It means that we are happy!
Beyond our moſt romantic wiſhes, happy!

Sigif. You but perplex me more.

Tanc. It means, my faireſt!
That thou art queen of Sicily; and I
The happieſt of mankind! than monarch more!
Becauſe with thee I can adorn my throne.
Manfred, who fell by tyrant William's rage,
Fam'd Roger's lineal iſſue, was my father. [*Pauſing.*
You droop, my love; dejected on a ſudden;
You ſeem to mourn my fortune——The ſoft tear
Springs in thy eye——O let me kiſs it off——
Why this, my Sigiſmunda?

Sigif. Royal Tancred,
None at your glorious fortune [illegible] like me.
Rejoice;—for me alone, of all Sicilians,
It makes unhappy.

Tanc. I ſhould hate it then!
Should throw, with ſcorn, the [illegible] from me!
No, Sigiſmunda, [illegible] hope with thee
To ſhare its [illegible]

Sigif.

Sigif. You are my ſovereign—I at humble diſtance—
Tanc. Thou art my queen! the ſovereign of my ſoul!
You never reign'd with ſuch triumphant luſtre.
Such winning charms as now; yet thou art ſtill
The dear, the tender, generous Sigiſmunda!
Who, with a heart exalted far above
Thoſe ſelfiſh views, that charm the common breaſt,
Stoop'd from the height of life, and courted beauty,
Then, then, to love me, when I ſeem'd of fortune
The hopeleſs outcaſt, when I had no friend,
None to protect and own me but thy father.
And wouldſt thou claim all goodneſs to thyſelf?
Canſt thou thy Tancred deem ſo dully form'd,
Of ſuch groſs clay, juſt as I reach the point——
A point my wildeſt hopes could never image——
In that great moment, full of every virtue,
That I ſhould then ſo mean a traitor prove
To the beſt bliſs and honour of mankind,
So much diſgrace the human heart, as then
For the dead form of flattery and pomp,
The faithleſs joys of courts, to quit kind truth,
The cordial ſweets of friendſhip and of love,
The life of life! my all, my Sigiſmunda!
I could upbraid thy fears, call them unkind,
Cruel, unjuſt, an outrage to my heart,
Did they not ſpring from love.
Sigif. Think not, my lord,
That to ſuch vulgar [illegible]
Your [illegible]

Of changing with the vain external change
Of circumſtance and fortune. Rather thence
It would, with riſing ardor, greatly feel
A noble pride to ſhew itſelf the ſame.
But ah! the hearts of kings are not their own.
There is a haughty duty that ſubjects them
To chains of ſtate, to wed the public welfare,
And not indulge the tender private virtues.
Some high-deſcended princeſs, who will bring
New power and intereſt to your throne, demands
Your royal hand—perhaps Conſtantia.——

Tanc. She!

O name her not! Were I this moment free,
And diſengag'd as he who never felt
The powerful eye of beauty, never ſigh'd
For matchleſs worth like thine, I ſhould abhor
All thoughts of that alliance. Her fell father
Moſt baſely murder'd mine: and ſhe his daughter,
Supported by his barbarous party, ſtill
His pride inherits, his imperious ſpirit
And inſolent pretenſions to my throne.
And canſt thou deem me then ſo poorly tame,
So cool a traitor to my father's blood,
As from the prudent cowardice of ſtate
E'er to ſubmit to ſuch a baſe propoſal?
Deteſted thought! O doubly, doubly hateful!
From the two ſtrongeſt paſſions; from averſion
To this Conſt[illegible]—and [illegible] love to thee.
[illegible] a venerable tyrant,
O[illegible] her [illegible]

The

The pride of kings enslaves them; their ambition,
Or interest, lords it o'er the better passions.
But vain their talk, mask'd under specious words
Of station, duty, and of public good:
They whom just Heaven has to a throne exalted,
To guard the rights and liberties of others,
What duty binds them to betray their own?
For me, my free-born heart shall bear no dictates,
But those of truth and honour; wear no chains,
But the dear chains of love and Sigismunda!
Or if indeed my choice must be directed
By views of public good, whom shall I chuse
So fit to grace, to dignify a crown,
And beam sweet mercy on a happy people,
As thee, my love? whom place upon my throne
But thee, descended from the good Siffredi?
'Tis fit that heart be thine, which drew from him
Whate'er can make it worthy thy acceptance.

Sigis. Cease, cease, to raise my hopes above my duty.
Charm me no more, my Tancred!—O that we
In those blest woods, where first you won my soul
Had pass'd our gentle days far from the toil
And pomp of courts! Such is the wish of love;
Of love, that, with delightful weakness, knows
No bliss and no ambition but itself.
But in the world's full light, those charming dreams,
Those fond illusions vanish. Awful duties,
The tyranny of men, even your own heart,
Whose just, in sense your passion stifles now,

And

And proud imperious honour call you from me.
'Tis all in vain—You cannot hush a voice
That murmurs here—I must not be persuaded:
Tanc. [*kneeling*] Hear me, thou soul of all my
hopes and wishes!
And sincerest Heaven! prime source of love and joy!
Not a whole warring world combin'd against me;
Its pride, its splendor, its imposing forms,
Nor interest, nor ambition, nor the face
Of solemn state, not even thy father's wisdom,
Shall ever shake my faith to Sigismunda.
[*Trumpets and acclamations heard.*]
But, hark! the public voice to duties call me,
Which with unweary'd zeal I will discharge;
And thou, yes thou, shalt be my bright reward——
Yet—ere I go—to hush thy lovely fears,
Thy delicate objections— [*writes his name.*]
Take this blank,
Sign'd with my name, and give to thy father:
Tell him, 'tis my command, it be filled up
With a most strict and solemn marriage-contract.
How dear each tye! how charming to my soul!
That more unites me to my Sigismunda.
For thee and for my people's good to live,
Is all the bliss which sovereign power can give.

End of the first Act.

ACT

ACT II. SCENE II.

SIFFREDI *alone.*

SO far 'tis well—The late king's will proceeds
Upon the plan I counsel'd; that Prince Tancred
Shall make Constantia partner of his throne.
O great, O wish'd event! whence the dire seeds
Of dark intestine broils, of civil war,
And all its dreadful miseries and crimes,
Shall be for ever rooted from the land.
May these dim eyes, long blasted by the rage
Of cruel faction and my country's woes,
Tir'd with the toils and vanities of life,
Behold this period, then be clos'd in peace!
But how this mighty obstacle surmount,
Which love has thrown betwixt? Love that disturbs
The schemes of wisdom still; that, wing'd with passion,
Blind and impetuous in its fond pursuits,
Leaves the grey-headed reason far behind.
Alas! how frail the state of human bliss!
When even our honest passions oft destroy it!
I was to blame, in solitude and shades,
In such scenes! to trust their youthful hearts.
Would I had mark'd the rising flame! 'tent now
Burns out with dangerous force—My daughter owns
Her passion for the king; she trembling own'd it,

With

With prayers, and tears, and tender ſupplications,
That almoſt ſhook my firmneſs——And this blank,
Which his raſh fondneſs gave her, ſhews how much,
To what a wild extravagance he loves———
I ſee no means—it foils my deepeſt thought—
How to control this madneſs of the king,
That tears the face of virtue, and will thence
Diſdain reſtraint, will from his generous heart
Borrow new rage, even ſpecioufly oppoſe
To reaſon, reaſon—But it muſt be done.
My own advice, of which I more and more
Approve the ſtrict conditions of the will,
Highly demand his marriage with Conſtantia;
Or elſe her party has a fair pretence,———
And all, at once, is horror and confuſion—
How iſſue from this maze?—The crouding barons
Here ſummon'd to the palace, meet already,
To pay their homage, and confirm the will.
On a few moments hangs the public fate,
On a few haſty moments—Ha! there ſhone
A gleam of hope—Yes—with this very paper
I yet will ſave him—Neceſſary means
For good and noble ends can ne'er be wrong.
In that reſiſtleſs, that peculiar caſe,
Deceit is truth and virtue—But how hold
This lion in the toil?—O I will form it
Of ſuch a fatal thread, twiſt it ſo ſtrong
With all the ties of honour and of duty,
That his moſt deſperate fury ſhall not break
The honeſt ſnare—Here is the royal hand———
I will

I will beneath it write a perfect, full,
And absolute agreement to the will;
Which read before the noblest of the realm
Assembled, in the sacred face of Sicily,
Constantia present, every heart and eye
Fix'd on their monarch, every tongue applauding,
He must submit, his dream of love must vanish.—
It shall be done!———To me, I know, 'tis ruin;
But safety to the public, to the king.
I will not reason more, I will not listen
Even to the voice of honour—No—'tis fix'd!
I here devote me for my prince and country;
Let them be safe, and let me nobly perish!
Behold Earl Osmond comes; without whose aid
My schemes are all in vain.

SCENE II.

OSMOND, SIFFREDI.

Osm. My Lord Siffredi,
I from the council hasten'd to Constantia,
And have accomplish'd what we there propos'd.
The princess to the will submits her claims.
She with her presence means to grace the senate,
And of your royal charge, young Tancred's hand,
Accept. At first, indeed, it check'd her hopes
Of reigning sole, this new surprising scene
Of Manfred's son, appointed by the king
With her [illegible]-heir.——But I [illegible]fully [illegible]d

The

The juſtice of the caſe, the public good,
And ſure eſtabliſh'd peace which thence would riſe,
Join'd to the ſtrong neceſſity that urg'd her,
If on Sicilia's throne, ſhe meant to ſit,
As to the wiſe diſpoſal of the will
Her high ambition tam'd. Methought, beſides,
I could diſcern that not from prudence merely
She to this choice ſubmitted.

Siff. Noble Oſmond,
You have in this done to the public great
And ſignal ſervice: Yes, I muſt avow it;
This frank and ready inſtance of your zeal,
In ſuch a trying criſis of the ſtate,
When int'reſt and ambition might have warp'd
Your views; I own, this truly generous virtue
Upbraids the raſhneſs of my former judgement.

Oſm. Siffredi, no—To you belongs the praiſe;
The glorious work is yours. Had I not ſeiz'd
Improv'd the wiſh'd occaſion to root out
Diviſion from the land, and ſave my country,
I had been baſe, been infamous for ever.
'Tis you, my lord, to whom the many thouſands,
That by the barbarous ſword of civil war
Had fallen inglorious, owe their lives; to you
The ſons of this fair iſle, from her firſt peers,
Down to the ſwain who tills her golden plains,
Owe their ſafe homes, their ſoft domeſtic hours,
And thro' late time poſterity ſhall bleſs you,
You who adviſ'd this will—I bluſh to think
I have ſo long oppoſ'd the beſt good man.

In Sicily—With what impartial care
Ought we to watch o'er prejudice and paſſion,
Nor truſt too much the jaundic'd eye of party!
Henceforth its vain deluſions I renounce,
Its hot determinations, that confine
All merit and all virtue to itſelf.
To yours I join my hand; with you will ow-
No intereſt and no party but my country.
Nor is your friendſhip only my ambition:
There is a dearer name, the name of father,
By which I ſhould rejoice to call Siffredi.
Your daughter's hand would to the public weal
Unite my private happineſs.

Siff. My lord,
You have my glad conſent. To be ally'd
To your diſtinguiſh'd family, and merit,
I ſhall eſteem an honour. From my ſoul
I here embrace Earl Oſmond as my friend,
And ſon.

Oſm. You make him happy. This aſſent,
So frank and warm, to what I long have wiſh'd,
Engages all my gratitude: at once,
In the firſt bloſſom, it matures our friendſhip.
I from this moment vow myſelf the friend,
And zealous ſervant of Siffredi's houſe.

Enter an officer belonging to the court.

[*To Siffredi.*] The king, my lord, commands
your ſpeedy preſence.

Siff. I will attend him ſtraight.—Farewel, my lord:
The

The ſenate meets; there, a few moments hence,
I will rejoin you.

Oſm. There, my noble lord,
We will compleat this ſalutary work,
Will there begin a new auſpicious æra.

SCENE III.

OSMOND *alone.*

Siffredi gives his daughter to my wiſhes—
But does ſhe give herſelf? Gay, young, and flatter'd,
Perhaps engag'd, will ſhe her youthful heart
Yield to my harſher, uncomplying years?
I am not form'd, by flattery and praiſe,
By ſighs and tears, and all the whining trade
Of love, to feed a fair one's vanity;
To charm at once and ſpoil. Theſe ſoft arts
Nor ſuit my years nor temper; theſe be left
To boys and doating age. A prudent father,
By nature charg'd to guide and rule her choice,
Reſigns his daughter to a huſband's power,
Who, with ſuperior dignity, with reaſon,
And manly tenderneſs, will ever love her;
Not firſt a kneeling ſlave, and then a tyrant.

SCENE IV.

OSMOND, BARONS.

Osm. My lords, I greet you well. This wond'rous day
Unites us all in amity and friendſhip,
We meet to-day with open hearts and looks,
Not gloom'd by party, ſcowling on each other,
But all the children of one happy iſle,
The ſocial ſons of liberty. No pride,
No paſſion now, no thwarting views divide us;
Prince Manfred's line, at laſt, to William's join'd,
Combines us in one family of brothers.
This to the late good king's well-order'd will,
And wiſe Siffredi's generous care we owe.
I truly give you joy. Firſt of you all,
I here renounce thoſe errors and diviſions
That have ſo long diſturb'd our peace, and ſeem'd,
Fermenting ſtill, to threaten new commotions—
By time inſtructed let us not diſdain
To quit miſtakes. We all, my lords, have err'd.
Men may, I find, be honeſt, tho' they differ.
1st Bar. Who follows not, my lord, [illegible] ex-
ample
You let us all, whate'er be his pretence,
Loves not, with fixt and unbiaſs'd heart,
His country as he ought.

2d Bar.

2d Bar. O beauteous peace!
Sweet union of a ſtate! What elſe, but thou,
Gives ſafety, ſtrength, and glory to a people!
I bow, lord conſtable, beneath the ſnow
Of many years; yet in my breaſt revives
A youthful flame. Methinks, I ſee again
Thoſe gentle days renew'd, that bleſs'd our iſle,
Ere by this waſteful fury of diviſion,
Worſe than our Etna's moſt deſtructive fires,
It deſolated ſunk. I ſee our plains
Unbounded waving with the gifts of harveſt;
Our ſeas with commerce throng'd, our buſy ports
With chearful toil. Our Enna blooms afreſh;
Afreſh the ſweets of thymy Hybla flow.
Our nymphs and ſhepherds, ſporting in each vale,
Inſpire new ſong, and wake the paſtoral reed——
The tongue of age is found—Come, come, my ſons;
I long to ſee this prince of whom the world
Speaks largely well—His father was my friend,
The brave unhappy Manfred——Come, my lords;
We tarry here too long.

SCENE V.

Two Officers, *keeping off the crowd.*

One of the crowd.

Shew us our King,
The valiant Manfred's ſon, who lov'd the people—
We will, we will behold him——Give us way.

1st Off. Pray, gentlemen, give back—It must not be———
Give back, I pray———On such a glad occasion
I would not ill intreat the lowest of you.

2d man of the crowd.

Nay, give us but a glimpse of our young king.
We more than any baron of them all,
Will pay him true allegiance.

2d Off. Friends—indeed—
You cannot pass this way—We have strict orders,
To keep for himself, and for the barons,
All these apartments clear—Go to the gate
That fronts the sea, you there will find admission.

All. Long live King Tancred! Manfred's son—
Huzza! [*Crowd goes off.*]

1st Off. I do not marvel at their rage of joy;
He is a brave and amiable prince.
When in my Lord Siffredi's house I liv'd,
Ere by his favour I obtain'd this office,
I there remember well the young Count Tancred.
To see him and to love him were the same.
He was so noble in his ways, yet still
So [illegible] and mild. Well, well, old Sicily,
Yet [illegible] days await thee!

2d Off. Grant it, Heaven!
[illegible] and troublous times [illegible]
He is, they say, to wed [illegible] king's [illegible]
Constant [illegible]

1st Off. Friend, of that I greatly [illegible]
Or I mistake, of Lord Siffredi's daughter.

The

The gentle Sigiſmunda, has his heart.
If one may judge by kindly-cordial looks,
And fond aſſiduous care to pleaſe each other,
Moſt certainly they love—O be they bleſt,
As they deſerve! It were great pity aught
Should part a matchleſs pair: the glory he,
And ſhe the blooming grace of Sicily!
2d Off. My Lord Rodolpho comes.

SCENE VI.

RODOLPHO, *from the ſenate.*

Rod. My honeſt friends,
You may retire. [*Officers go out.*]
A ſtorm is in the wind.
This will perplexes all. No, Tancred never
Can ſtoop to theſe conditions, which at once
Attack his rights, his honour, and his love.
Thoſe wiſe old men, thoſe plodding grave ſtate-pedants,
Forget the courſe of youth; their crooked prudence,
To baſeneſs verging ſtill, forgets to take
[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]

He saw the tyrant's daughter. But confess'd,
At least to me, the doubling tempest frown'd,
And shook his swelling bosom, when he heard
Th' unjust, the base conditions of the will.
Uncertain, tost in cruel agitation,
He oft, methought address'd himself to speak
And interrupt Siffredi; who appear'd,
With conscious haste, to dread that interruption,
And hurry'd on—But hark! I hear a noise,
As if th' assembly rose!—Ha! Sigismunda,
Oppress'd with grief, and wrapt in pensive sorrow,
Passes along———

[*Sigismunda and attendants pass through the back scene. Laura advances.*

SCENE VII.

RODOLPHO, LAURA.

Laur. Your high-prais'd friend, the king,
Is false, most vilely false! The meanest slave
Had shown a nobler heart; nor grossly thus,
By the first bait ambition spread, been gull'd.
He Manfred's son! away! it cannot be!
The son of that brave prince could ne'er betray
Those rights so long usurp'd from his great father,
Which he, this day, by [illegible] amazing fortune,
Had just regain'd; he never would sacrifice
All faith, all honour, gratitude, and [illegible]
Even just resentment of his father's fate,

And

And pride itſelf; whate'er exalts a man,
Above the groveling ſons of peaſant-mud,
All in a moment—And for what? why truly,
For kind permiſſion gracious leave, to ſit
On his own throne with tyrant William's daughter!

Rod. I ſtand amaz'd—You ſurely wrong him, Laura.

There muſt be ſome miſtake.

Laur. There can be none!
Siffredi read his full and free conſent
Before th' applauding ſenate. True indeed,
A ſmall remain of ſhame, a timorous weakneſs,
Even daſtardly in falſehood made him bluſh
To act this ſcene in Sigiſmunda's eye,
Who ſunk beneath his perfidy and baſeneſs.
Hence, till to-morrow he adjourn'd the ſenate—
To-morrow fix'd with infamy to crown him!
Then, leading off his gay triumphant princeſs,
He left the poor unhappy Sigiſmunda,
To bend her trembling ſteps to that ſad home
His faithleſs vows will render hateful to her—
He comes—Farewel—I cannot bear his preſence!

SCENE VIII.

TANCRED, SIFFREDI, RODOLPHO.

Be ſhut—Defend me from a hateful world,
The bane of peace and honour—then return—
What! doſt thou haunt me ſtill? O monſtrous in-
ſult!
Unparallell'd indignity! Juſt Heaven!
Was ever king, was ever man ſo treated?
So trampled into baſeneſs!

Siff. Here, my liege,
Here ſtrike? I nor deſerve, nor aſk for mercy.

Tanc. Diſtraction!—O my ſoul—Hold, reaſon,
hold
Thy giddy ſeat—O this inhuman outrage
Unhinges thought!

Siff. Exterminate thy ſervant!

Tanc. All, all but this I could have borne—but this!
This daring inſolence beyond example!
This murderous ſtroke that ſtabs my peace for ever!
That wounds me there—there! where the human
heart
Moſt exquiſitely feels——

Siff. O bear it not,
My royal lord! appeaſe on me your vengeance!

Tanc. Did ever tyrant image aught ſo cruel?
The loweſt ſlave that crawls upon the earth,
Robb'd of each comfort Heaven beſtows on mortals,
On the bare ground has ſtill his virtue left,
The ſacred treaſures of an honeſt heart,
Which thou haſt dar'd, [illegible] audacious hand,
And impious fraud, [illegible]

Siff. Behold, my [illegible]

Which not repents its crime—O glorious! happy!
If by my ruin I can ſave your honour.

Tanc. Such honour I renounce! with ſov'reign ſcorn,
Greatly deteſt it, and its mean adviſer!
Haſt thou not dar'd beneath my name to ſhelter—
My name for other purpoſes deſign'd,
Given from the fondneſs of a faithful heart,
With the beſt love o'erflowing, haſt thou not
Beneath thy ſovereign's name baſely preſum'd
To ſhield a lie? a lie! in public utter'd,
To all deluded Sicily? But know
This poor contrivance is as weak as baſe.
In ſuch a wretched toil none can be held
But fools and cowards—Soon thy flimſy arts,
Touch'd by my juſt, my burning indignation,
Shall burſt like threads in flame!—Thy doating prudence
But more ſecures the purpoſe it would ſhake.
Had my reſolves been wavering and doubtful,
This would confirm them, make them fix'd as fate;
This adds the only motive that was wanting
To urge them on thro' war and deſolation——
What! marry her! Conſtantia! Her! the daughter
Of the fell tyrant who deſtroy'd my father!
The very thought is madneſs! Ere thou ſeeſt
The torch of Hymen light theſe hated nuptials,
Thou ſhalt behold [illegible] wrapt in flames,
Her cities [illegible] drench'd with ſlaughter—
Love ſet aſſou[illegible] aſſumes the quarrel.

——My

My honour now is up; in ſpite of thee,
A world combin'd againſt me, I will give
This ſcatter'd Will in fragments to the winds,
Aſſert my rights, the freedom of my heart,
Cruſh all who dare oppoſe me to the duſt,
And heap perdition on thee!

Siff. Sir, 'tis juſt.
Exhauſt on me your rage; I claim it all.
But for thoſe public threats thy paſſion utters,
'Tis what thou canſt not do!

Tanc. I cannot! Ha!
Driven to the dreadful brink of ſuch diſhonour,
Enough to make the tameſt coward brave,
And into fierceneſs rouſe the mildeſt nature,
What ſhall arreſt my vengeance? who?

Siff. Thyſelf!

Tanc. Away! Dare not to juſtify thy crime!
That, that alone can aggravate its horror,
Add inſolence to inſolence——perhaps
May make my rage forget——

Siff. O let it burſt
On this grey head devoted to thy ſervice!
But when the ſtorm has vented all its fury,
Thou then muſt hear—nay more—I know thou wilt,
Wilt hear the calm, yet ſtronger voice of reaſon.
Thou muſt reflect, that a whole people's ſafety,
The weal of truſted millions ſhou'd bear down,
Thyſelf the judge, thy [illegible] partial pleaſure.
Thou muſt reflect that there are other laws,
A nobler pride, a [illegible]

Superior

Superior pleaſures far, that will oblige,
Compel thee to abide by this my deed,
Unwarranted perhaps in common juſtice,
But which neceſſity, even virtue's tyrant,
With awful voice commanded--Yes, thou muſt,
In calmer hours, diveſt thee of thy love,
Thoſe common paſſions of the vulgar breaſt,
This boiling heat of youth, and be a king!
The lover of thy people!

Tanc. Truths ill employ'd!
Abus'd to colour guilt! A king! a king!
Yes, I will be a king, but not a ſlave!
In this will be a king! in this my people
Shall learn to judge how I will guard their rights,
When they behold me vindicate my own.
But have I, ſay, been treated like a king?——
Heavens! could I ſtoop to ſuch outrageous uſage,
I were a mean, a ſhameleſs wretch, unworthy
To wield a ſceptre in a land of ſlaves,
A ſoil abhorr'd of virtue, ſhould belye
My father's blood, belye thoſe very maxims,
At other times, you taught my youth—Siffredi!

[*In a ſoftened tone of voice.*]

Siff. Behold, my prince, behold thy poor old ſervant,
Whoſe darling care, theſe twenty years, has been
To nurſe thee up to virtue; who, for thee,
Thy glory and thy weal, [illegible] all,
All intereſt [illegible] ambition [illegible] forth;
What many a ſelfiſh father would purſue
Thro' treachery and [illegible] him here,
Bent on his feeble knees, to beg [illegible] thee,

With

With tears to beg thee, to controul thy paſſion,
And ſave thyſelf, thy honour, and thy people!
Kneeling with me behold the many thouſands
To thy protection truſted: Fathers, mothers,
The ſacred front of venerable age,
The tender virgin and the helpleſs infant;
The miniſters of Heaven, thoſe who maintain,
Around thy throne, the majeſty of rule;
And thoſe, whoſe labour, ſcorch'd by winds and ſun,
Feeds the rejoicing public: ſee them all,
Here at thy feet, conjuring thee to ſave them,
From miſery and war, from crimes and rapine!
Can there be aught, kind Heaven! in ſelf indulgence
To weigh down theſe? This aggregate of love,
With which compar'd the deareſt private paſſion
Is but the waſted duſt upon the balance?
Turn not away—Oh is there not ſome part,
In thy great heart, ſo ſenſible to kindneſs,
And generous warmth, ſome nobler part, to feel
The prayers and tears of theſe, the mingled voice
Of heaven and earth!

Tanc. There is! and thou haſt touch'd it.
Riſe, riſe, Siffredi—Oh, thou haſt undone me,
Unkind old man! O ill intreated Tancred!
Which way ſo'er I turn me, diſhonour rears
Her hideous front—and miſery and ruin!
Was it for this you took ſuch care to form me?
For this imbued me with the quickeſt [illegible]
Of ſhame; theſe finer feelings, that ne'er [illegible]
The common maſs of [illegible]
In bleſt inſenſibility? O rather

You

You ſhould have fear'd my heart; taught me that power
And ſplendid intereſt lord it ſtill o'er virtue;
That, gilded by proſperity and pride,
There is no ſhame, no meanneſs: temper'd thus,
I had been fit to rule a venal world.
Alas! what meant thy wantonneſs of prudence?
Why have you rais'd this miſerable conflict
Betwixt the duties of the king and man?
Set virtue againſt virtue?—Ah, Siffredi!
'Tis thy ſuperfluous, thy unfeeling wiſdom,
That has involv'd me in a maze of error,
Almoſt beyond retreat—But hold, my ſoul,
Thy ſteady purpoſe—Toſt by various paſſions,
To this eternal anchor keep—There is,
Can be no public without private virtue—
Then mark me well, obſerve what I command;
It is the ſole expedient now remaining——
To-morrow, when the ſenate meets again,
Unfold the whole, unravel the deceit;
Nor that alone, try to repair its miſchief;
There all thy power, thy eloquence and intereſt
Exert, to reinſtate me in my rights,
And from thy own dark ſnares to diſembroil me——
Start not, my lord—This muſt and ſhall be done!
Or here our friendſhip ends—Howe'er diſguis'd,
Whatever thy pretence, thou art a traitor.
Sig. I ſhould indeed deſerve the name of traitor,
And even a traitor's fate, had I ſo ſlightly,

From principles ſo weak, done what I did,
As e'er to diſavow it——
Tanc. Ha!
Siff. My liege,
Expect not this—Tho' practis'd long in courts,
I have not ſo far learn'd their ſubtle trade,
To veer obedient with each guſt of paſſion.
I honour thee, I venerate thy orders,
But honour more my duty. Nought on earth
Shall ever ſhake me from that ſolid rock,
Nor ſmiles nor frowns.——
Tanc. You will not then?
Siff. I cannot!
Tanc. Away! begone?—O my Rodolpho, come,
And ſave me from this traitor!—Hence, I ſay,
Avoid my preſence ſtrait! and know, old man,
Thou my worſt foe beneath the maſk of friendſhip,
Who, not content to trample in the duſt
My deareſt rights, doſt with cool inſolence
Perſiſt, and call it duty; hadſt thou not
A daughter that protects thee, thou ſhould'ſt feel
The vengeance thou deſerveſt—No reply!
Away!

SCENE IX.

TANCRED, RODOLPHO.

Rod. What can provoke my prince ſo highly
Againſt his friend [illegible]?

Tanc.

Tanc. Friend! Rodolpho?
When I have told thee what this friend has done,
How play'd me like a boy, a baſe-born wretch,
Who had not heart nor ſpirit! thou wilt ſtand
Amaz'd and wonder at my ſtupid patience.
Rod. I heard, with mixt aſtoniſhment and grief,
The king's unjuſt diſhonourable will,
Void in itſelf—I ſaw you ſtung with rage,
And writhing in the ſnare; juſt as I went,
At your command, to wait you here—but that
Was the king's deed, not his.
Tanc. O he adviſ'd it!
Theſe many years he has in ſecret hatch'd
This black contrivance, glories in the ſcheme,
And proudly plumes him with his traiterous virtue.
But that was nought, Rodolpho, nothing, nothing!
O that was gentle, blameleſs, to what follow'd!
I had, my friend, to Sigiſmunda given,
To huſh her fears, in the full guſh of fondneſs,
A blank ſign'd by my hand—and he—O heavens,
Was ever ſuch a wild attempt!——he wrote
Beneath my name an abſolute compliance
To this deteſted will: nay, dared to read it
Before myſelf, on my [illegible] throne,
His idle pageant plac'd——O words are weak
To paint the pangs, the rage, the indignation,
That whirl'd from thought to thought my ſoul in tempeſt,
[illegible]
[illegible]
All

All mad with acclamation, what, Rodolpho,
What could I do? The ſole relief that roſe
To my diſtracted mind, was to adjourn
Th' aſſembly till to-morrow—But to-morrow
What can be done?—O it avails not what!
I care not what is done——My only care
Is how to clear my faith to Sigiſmunda:
She thinks me falſe! She caſt a look that kill'd me!
O I am baſe in Sigiſmunda's eye!
The loweſt of mankind, the moſt perfidious!

Rod. This was a ſtrain of inſolence indeed,
A daring outrage of ſo ſtrange a nature,
As ſtuns me quite.——

Tanc. Curs'd be my timid prudence!
That daſh'd not back, that moment, in his face,
The bold preſumptuous lie—and curs'd this hand!
That from a ſtart of poor diſſimulation,
Led off my Sigiſmunda's hated rival.
Ah then! what, poiſon'd by the falſe appearance,
What, Sigiſmunda, were thy thoughts of me?
[illegible] in the ſilent bitterneſs of ſoul,
[illegible] didſt thou ſcorn me! hate mankind thyſelf,
[illegible] to the vows of faithleſs Tancred:
For [illegible] Heam'd—I was [illegible] The thought diſtracts me!
I ſhould have caſt a flattering world aſide,
[illegible] from my throne, before [illegible] all avow'd her,
The [illegible] glory of my free-born he[illegible]
And [illegible] ſhameful fetters thrown [illegible]—
Inſtead of [illegible]—what [illegible]
Has clinch'd the chaſe, conſ[illegible]

And

And fix'd me down to infamy!
Rod. My lord,
Blame not the conduct, which your situation
Tore from your tortur'd heart—What could you do?
Had you, so circumstanc'd, in open senate,
Before th' astonish'd public, with no friends
Prepar'd, no party form'd, affronted thus
The haughty princess and her powerful faction.
Supported by this will, the sudden stroke,
Abrupt and premature, might have recoil'd
Upon yourself, even your own friends revolted,
And turn'd at once the public scale against you.
Besides, consider had you then detected
In its fresh guilt this action of Siffredi,
You must with signal vengeance have chastis'd
The treasonable deed——Nothing so mean
As weak insulted power that dares not punish.
And how would that have suited with your love?
His daughter present too? Trust me, your conduct,
Howe'er abhorrent to a heart like yours,
Was fortunate and wise—Not that I mean
E'er to advise submission——
Tanc. Heavens! Submission!
Could I descend to bear it, even in thought,
Despise me, you, the world, and Sigismunda!
Submission! No! to-morrow's glorious light
Shall flash discovery on this scene of baseness.
Whatever be the risk, by heaven! to-morrow
I will [illegible] in full [illegible]
Of these [illegible] assembled senate,
That

That Manfred's ſon knows to aſſert and wear,
With indiminiſh'd dignity, that crown
This unexpected day has plac'd upon him.
But this, my friend, theſe ſtormy guſts of pride
Are foreign to my love—Till Sigiſmunda
Be diſabus'd, my breaſt is tumult all,
And can obey no ſettled courſe of reaſon.
I ſee her ſtill, I feel her powerful image,
That look, where with reproach complaint was mix'd,
Big with ſoft woe and gentle indignation,
Which ſeem'd at once to pity and to ſcorn me—
O let me find her! I too long have left
My Sigiſmunda to converſe with tears,
A prey to thoughts that picture me a villain.
But ah! how, clogg'd, with this accurſed ſtate,
A tedious world, ſhall I now find acceſs?
Her father too.—Ten thouſand horrors croud
Into the wild fantaſtic eye of love—
Who knows what he may do? Come, then, my friend,
And by thy ſiſter's hand O let me ſteal
A letter to her boſom—I no longer
Can bear her abſence, by the juſt contempt
She now muſt brand me with, inflam'd to madneſs.
Fly, my Rodolpho, fly! engage thy ſiſter
To aid my letter, and this very evening
Secure an interview.—I would not hear
Th[illegible] not for my kingdom!
[illegible] ſolitude and ſhades,
[illegible] thought

Thought drives on thought, on passions passions roll;
Her smiles alone can calm my raging soul.

End of the Second Act.

ACT III. SCENE I.

SIGISMUNDA *alone, sitting in a disconsolate posture.*

AH tyrant prince! Ah more than faithless Tancred!
Ungenerous and inhuman in thy falsehood!
Hadst thou, this morning, when my hopeless heart,
Submissive to my fortune and my duty,
Had so much spirit left, as to be willing
To give thee back thy vows, ah! hadst thou then
Confess'd the sad necessity thy state
Impos'd upon thee, and with gentle friendship,
Since we must part at last, our parting soften'd:
I should indeed—I should have been unhappy,
But not to this extreme—Amidst my grief,
Thy, with positive pleasure, cherish'd still
The sweet remembrance of thy former love;
Thy image still had dwelt upon my soul,
And made our gauntlets were [illegible]
But coolly th[illegible]—How could [illegible] so cruel?
Thus to [illegible] to [illegible] my love,

And

And call forth all its tenderness, then sink me
In black despair—What unrelenting pride
Possess'd thy breast, that thou couldst bear unmov'd
To see me bent beneath a weight of shame?
Pangs thou canst never feel? How couldst thou drag me,
In barbarous triumph at a rival's car?
How make me witness to a sight of horror?
That hand, which, but a few short hours ago,
So wantonly abus'd my simple faith,
Before th' attesting world given to another,
Irrevocably given!—There was a time,
When the least cloud that hung upon my brow,
Perhaps imagin'd only, touch'd thy pity.
Then, brighten'd often by the ready tear,
Thy looks were softness all; then the quick heart,
In every nerve alive, forgot itself,
And for each other then we felt alone.
But now, alas! those tender days are fled:
Now thou canst see me wretched, pierc'd with anguish,
With studied anguish of thy own creating,
[illegible] thy harden'd eye—Hold, let me think—
I [illegible] thee sure! thou canst not be so [illegible],
As [illegible] in my misery to triumph.
[illegible] Why should I search [illegible] pain?
O 'tis [illegible]—Tis fickleness of nature,
'Tis [illegible] love [illegible] by ambition—
Is there, [illegible] no constancy in man?
No steadfast truth, [illegible]

That can bear up against a selfish world?
No, there is none—Even Tancred is inconstant?
[*Rising.*]
Hence, let me fly this scene!—Whate'er I see,
These roofs, these walls, each object that surrounds me,
Are tainted with his vows——But whither fly?
The groves are worse, the soft retreat of Belmont,
Its deepening glooms, gay lawns, and airy summits,
Will wound my busy memory to torture,
And all its shades will whisper—faithless Tancred!—
My father comes——How, sunk in this disorder,
Shall I sustain his presence?

SCENE II.

SIFFREDI, SIGISMUNDA.

Siff. Sigismunda,
My dearest child! I grieve to find thee thus
A prey to tears. I know the powerful cause
From which they flow, and therefore can excuse them,
But not their wilful obstinate continuance.
Come, rouse thee then, call up thy drooping spirit;
Come, wake to reason from this dream of love,
And shew the world thou art Siffredi's daughter.
Sigis. Alas! I am unworthy of that name.
Siff. Thou art indeed to blame, [illegible] too rashly
Engag'd thy heart, without a [illegible] sanction,
But this I can [illegible] The king has virtue.

That

That plead thy full excuse; nor was I void
Of blame, to trust thee to those dangerous virtues.
Then dread not my reproaches. Tho' he blames,
Thy tender father pities more than blames thee.
Thou art my daughter still; and, if thy heart
Will now resume its pride, assert itself,
And greatly rise superior to this trial,
I to my warmest confidence again
Will take thee, and esteem thee more my daughter.

Sigis. O you are gentler far than I deserve!
It is, it ever was, my darling pride,
To bend my soul to your supreme commands,
Your wisest will; and tho', by love betray'd—
Alas! and punish'd too—I have transgress'd
The nicest bounds of duty, yet I feel,
A sentiment of tenderness, a source
Of filial nature springing in my breast,
That, should it kill me, shall control this passion,
And make me all submission and obedience
To you, my honour'd lord, the best of fathers.

Siff. Come to my arms, thou comfort of my age!
Thou only joy and hope of these grey hairs!
Come! let me take thee to a parent's heart;
There, with the kindly aid of my advice,
Even with the dew of these paternal tears,
Revive and nourish this becoming spirit—
Then thou dost promise me, my Sigismunda—
Thy father stoops to make it his request—
Thou wilt resume thy [illegible] presumptuous hopes,
And henceforth never more [illegible] the thought

That

That in the light of love regards the king?

Sigis. Hopes I have none! Those by this fatal day
Are blasted all——But from my soul to banish,
While weeping memory there retains her seat,
Thoughts which the purest bosom might have cherish'd,
Once my delight, now even in anguish charming,
Is more, alas! my lord, than I can promise.

Siff. Absence and time, the softner of our passions,
Will conquer this. Mean time, I hope from thee
A generous great effort; that thou wilt now
Exert thy utmost force, nor languish thus
Beneath the vain extravagance of love.
Let not thy father blush to hear it said,
His daughter was so weak, e'er to admit
A thought so void of reason, that a king
Should to his rank, his honour, and his glory,
The high important duties of a throne,
Even to his throne itself, madly prefer
A wild romantic passion, the fond child
Of youthful-dreaming thought and vacant hours;
That he should quit his heaven-appointed station,
Desert his awful charge, the care of all
The toiling millions which this isle contains,
Nay more, should plunge them into war and ruin:
And all to soothe a sick imagination,
A miserable weakness—Must for thee,
To make thee blest, Sicily be [illegible]
The king [illegible] to the [illegible]
O, many [illegible] here

Of ſome ſoft tale, and ruſh on ſure deſtruction?
Canſt thou, my daughter, let the monſtrous thought
Poſſeſs one moment thy perverted fancy?
Rouſe thee, for ſhame! and if a ſpark of virtue
Lies ſlumb'ring in thy ſoul, bid it blaze forth;
Nor ſink unequal to the gl[illegible]ous leſſon,
This day thy lover gave thee from his throne.

Sigiſ. Ah, that was not from virtue!—Had, my father,
That been his aim, I yield to what you ſay;
'Tis powerful truth, unanſwerable reaſon.
Then, then, with ſad but duteous reſignation,
I had ſubmitted as became your daughter;
But in that moment, when my humbled hopes
Were to my duty reconcil'd, to raiſe them
To yet a fonder height than e'er they knew,
Then rudely daſh them down—There is the ſting!
The blaſting view is ever preſent to me—
Why did you drag me to a ſight ſo cruel?

Siff. It was a ſcene to fire thy emulation.

Sigiſ. It was a ſcene of perfidy!—But know,
I will do more than imitate the king—
For he is falſe!—I, tho' ſincerely piere'd
With the beſt, truelt paſſion, ever touch'd
A virgin's breaſt, here [illegible] Heaven [illegible] you,
Tho' from my heart I [illegible] from my [illegible]
To eaſt this prince.—What would you more, my father?

Siff. Yes, one thing more—thy [illegible] it imp-

[illegible] Tho'

Tho' by the voice of innocence and virtue
Abſolv'd, we live not to ourſelves alone;
A rigorous world, with peremptory ſway,
Subjects us all, and even the nobleſt moſt.
This world from thee, my honour and thy own,
Demands one ſtep; a ſtep, by which convinc'd
The king may ſee thy heart diſdains to wear
A chain which his has greatly thrown aſide.
'Tis fitting too, thy ſex's pride commands thee,
To ſhew th' approving world thou canſt reſign,
As well as he, nor with inferior ſpirit,
A paſſion fatal to the public weal.
But above all, thou muſt root out for ever
From the king's breaſt the leaſt remains of hope,
And henceforth make his mention'd love diſhonour.
Theſe things, my daughter, that muſt needs be done,
Can but this way be done——by the ſafe refuge,
The ſacred ſhelter of a huſband's arms.
And there is one——

Sigiſ. Good Heavens! what means my lord?

Siff. One of illuſtrious family, high rank,
Yet ſtill of higher dignity and merit,
Who can and will protect thee; one to awe
The king himſelf—Nay, hear me Sigiſmunda——
The noble [illegible] court thee for his bride,
And [illegible] plighted word—This day——

Sigiſ. [illegible] My father,
Let me with [illegible] arms [illegible] thy knees
O [illegible]
If [illegible]

[illegible] When

When, as I prattling twin'd around your neck,
You ſnatch'd me to your boſom, kiſs'd my eyes,
And melting ſaid you ſaw my mother there;
O ſave me from that worſt ſeverity
Of fate! O outrage not my breaking heart
To that degree—I cannot!—'tis impoſſible!——
So ſoon withdraw it, give it to another——
Hear me, my deareſt father! hear the voice
Of nature and humanity, that plead
As well as juſtice for me!—Not to chuſe
Without your wiſe direction may be duty;
But ſtill my choice is free—That is a right,
Which even the loweſt ſlave can never loſe.
And would you thus degrade me? make me baſe?
For ſuch it were, to give my worthleſs perſon
Without my heart, an injury to Oſmond,
The higheſt can be done—Let me, my lord——
Or I ſhall die, ſhall by the ſudden change
Be to diſtraction ſhock'd——let me wear out
My hapleſs days in ſolitude and ſilence,
Far from the malice of a prying world!
At leaſt—you cannot ſure refuſe me this——
Give me a little time—I will do all,
All I can do to pleaſe you!——O your eye
Shed a kind beam——

Siff. My daughter! you abuſe
The ſoftneſs of my nature—

Siff. Here, my father,
Till you reſent, here will I grow for ever!

Siff. Riſe, [illegible] my heart.

Nothin

Nothing can shake th' inexorable dictates
Of honour, duty, and determin'd reason.
Then by the holy ties of filial love,
Resolve, I charge thee, to receive Earl Osmond,
As suits the man who is thy father's choice,
And worthy of thy hand—I go to bring him——

Sigis. Spare me, my dearest father!

Siff. [*Aside.*] I must rush
From her soft grasp, or nature will betray me!
O grant us, Heaven! that fortitude of mind,
Which listens to our duty, not our passions—
Quit me, my child!

Sigis. You cannot, O my father!
You cannot leave me thus!

Siff. Come hither, Laura.
Come to thy friend. Now shew thyself a friend.
Combat her weakness; dissipate her tears;
Cherish, and reconcile her to her duty.

SCENE III.

SIGISMUNDA, LAURA.

Sigis. O woe on woe! distress'd by love and duty
O every way unhappy Sigismunda!

Laur. Forgive me, Madam, if I blame your grief
How can you waste your tears on one so false?
Unworthy of your tenderness? to whom
Nought but your scorn is due and indignation?

Sigis. Thou know'st not all the horrors of my fate!

I might perhaps have learn'd to ſcorn his falſhood:
Nay, when the firſt ſad burſt of tears was paſt,
I might have rous'd my pride, and ſcorn'd himſelf—
But 'tis too much, this greateſt laſt misfortune—
O whither ſhall I fly? Where hide me, Laura,
From the dire ſcene my father now prepares!

Laur. What thus alarms you, Madam!

Sigiſ. Can it be?
Can I—ah no!—at once give to another
My violated heart! in one wild moment?
He brings Earl Oſmond to receive my vows!
O dreadful change! for Tancred, haughty Oſmond!

Laur. Now, on my ſoul, 'tis what an outrag'd heart,
Like your's, ſhould wiſh—I ſhould, by heavens, eſteem it
Moſt exquiſite revenge!

Sigiſ. Revenge on whom?
On my own heart, already but too wretched!

Laur. On him! this Tancred! who has baſely ſold,
For the dull form of deſpicable grandeur,
His faith, his love!—At once a ſlave and tyrant!

Sigiſ. O rail at me, at my believing folly,
My vain ill-founded hopes, [illegible] ſpare him, Laura!

Laur. Who rais'd theſe [illegible]? who triumphs o'er that weakneſs?
Pardon the word—You greater merit him,
Better than him, with all his giddy pomp!
You rais'd him by your ſmile [illegible] was nothing!
Where is your [illegible] pride? [illegible] guardian ſpirit
Given us to [illegible]

Ye powers! I cannot bear the thought with patience,
Yet recent from the most unsparing vows
The tongue of love e'er lavish'd; from your hopes
So vainly, idly, cruelly deluded;
Before the public thus, before your father,
By an irrevocable solemn deed,
With such inhuman scorn to throw you from h[illegible]
To give his faithless hand, yet warm [illegible] mine,
With complicated meanness, [illegible] constantia!
And to compleat his crime, when thy weak limbs
Could scarce support thee, then, of thee regardless,
To lead her off!

Sigis. That was indeed a sight
To poison love, to turn it into rage
And keen contempt!——What means this stupid weakness
That hangs upon me? Hence, unworthy tears!
Disgrace my cheek no more! No more my heart,
For one so cooly false or meanly sickle—
O it imports not which—Dare to suggest
The least excuse!—Yes, traitor, I will wring
Thy pride, will turn thy triumph to confusion!
I will not pine away my days for thee,
Sighing to brooks and groves; while, with vain pity,
You in a rival's arms lament my fate——
No! let me perish! [illegible] I rarely be
That [illegible] that patient, gentle Sigismunda,
Who [illegible] sole her with the wretched boast,
She was for thee unhappy [illegible]
I will be no[illegible] so!—Sicilia's [illegible]

Shall wond'ring see in me a great example
Of one who punish'd an ill judging heart,
Who made it bow to what it most abhorr'd!
Crush'd it to misery! for having thus
So lightly listen'd to a worthless lover!

Laur. At last it mounts! the kindling pride of virtue!
Trust me, [illegible] marriage will imbitter his—

Sigis. O may th[illegible] light [illegible] nuptial torch!
Be it accurs'd as mine! for the fair peace,
The tender joys of hymeneal love,
May jealousy awak'd, and fell remorse,
Pour all their fiercest venom thro' his breast!
Where the fates lead, and blind revenge, I follow!—
Let me not think—By injur'd love! I vow,
Thou shalt, base prince! perfidious and inhuman!
Thou shalt behold me in another's arms!
In his thou hatest! Osmond's!

Laur. That will grind
His heart with secret rage! Aye, that will sting
His soul to madness! set him up a terror,
A spectacle of woe to faithless lovers!
Your cooler thought, besides, will of the change
Approve, and think it happy. Noble Osmond
From the same stock with him derives his birth,
First of Sicilian barons, [illegible]dent, brave,
Of [illegible] honour, an[illegible] all rever'd ——

Sigis. Talk not of Osmond, but perfidious Tancred!
Rail at him, [illegible] new names of scorn!
Assist me, Laura [illegible] fresh fuel;

Support

Support my ſtaggering purpoſe, which already
Begins to fail me—Ah, my vaunts how vain!
How have I ly'd to my own heart!—Alas!
My tears return, the mighty flood o'erwhelms me!
Ten thouſand crouding images diſtract
My tortur'd thought—And is it come to this?
Our hopes? our vows? our oft-repeated wiſhes,
Breath'd from the fervent ſoul, and full of heaven,
To make each other happy?—come to this!

Laur. If thy own peace and honour cannot keep
Thy reſolution fix'd, yet, Sigiſmunda,
O think, how deeply, how beyond retreat,
Thy father is engag'd.

Sigiſ. Ah wretched weakneſs!
That thus enthrals my ſoul, that chaſes thence
Each nobler thought, the ſenſe of every duty!
And have I then no tears for thee, my father?
Can I forget thy cares, from helpleſs years,
Thy tenderneſs for me? an eye ſtill beam'd
With love? a brow that never knew a frown?
Nor a harſh word thy tongue? Shall I for theſe
Repay thy ſtooping venerable age,
With ſhame, diſquiet, anguiſh, and diſhonour?
It muſt not be!—Thou firſt of angels! come,
Sweet filial piety! and firm my breaſt!
Yes, let one daughter to her fate ſubmit,
Be nobly wretched—but her father happy!—
Laurit! they come!—O heaven! I cannot ſtand
The horrid trial!—Open, open earth!
And hide me from their view.

Laur. Madam!—

SCENE

SCENE IV.

SIFFREDI, OSMOND, SIGISMUNDA, LAURA.

Siff. My daughter,
Behold my noble friend who courts thy hand,
And whom to call my ſon I ſhall be proud;
Nor ſhall I leſs be pleas'd in his alliance
To ſee thee happy.

Oſm. Think not, I preſume,
Madam, on this your father's kind conſent,
To make me bleſt. I love you from a heart,
That ſeeks your good ſuperior to my own;
And will, by every art of tender friendſhip,
Conſult your deareſt welfare. May I hope,
Yours does not diſavow your father's choice?

Sigiſ. I am a daughter, Sir—and have no power
O'er my own heart—I die—Support me, Laura.
[*Faints.*]

Siff. Help—Bear her off—She breathes——my daughter!—

Sigiſ. Oh!—
Forgive my weakneſs—ſoft—my Laura, lead me—
To my apartment.

Siff. Pardon me, my lord,
If, by this ſudden accident alarm'd,
I leave you for a moment.

SCENE V.

OSMOND *alone.*

Let me think—
What can this mean?—Is it to me averſion?
Or is it, as I fear'd, ſhe loves another?
Ha!—yes—perhaps the king, the young Count Tancred!
They were bred up together—Surely that,
That cannot be—Has he not given his hand
In the moſt ſolemn manner to Conſtantia?
Does not his crown depend upon the deed?
No—if they lov'd, and this old ſtateſman knew it,
He could not to a king prefer a ſubject.
His virtues I eſteem—nay more, I truſt them—
So far as virtue goes—but could he place
His daughter on the throne of Sicily—
O 'tis a glorious bribe, too much for man!
What is it then?—I care not what it be.
My honour now, my dignity demands,
That my propos'd alliance, by her father,
And even herſelf accepted, be not ſcorn'd.
I love her too——I never knew till now
To what a pitch I lov'd her. O the ſhot
Thouſand charms into my inmoſt ſoul!
She look'd ſo mild, ſo amiably gentle,
She bow'd her head, ſhe glow'd with ſuch confuſion,
Such ſweetneſs of modeſty ſhe is,

In

In gracious mind, in manners, and in perſon,
The perfect model of all female beauty!
She muſt be mine——She is!——If yet her heart
Conſents not to my happineſs, her duty,
Join'd to my tender cares, will gain ſo much
Upon her generous nature——That will follow.
The man of ſenſe, who acts a prudent part,
Not flattering ſteals, but forms himſelf the heart.

End of the Third Act.

ACT IV. SCENE I.

The garden belonging to SIFFREDI'S *houſe.*

SIGISMUNDA, LAURA.

SIGISMUNDA, *with a letter in her hand.*

'TIS done!——I am a ſlave!——The fatal vow
Has paſs'd my lips!——Methought in thoſe
[illegible] moments,
The tombs around the ſaints, the darken'd altar,
And all the trembling ſhrines with horror ſhook.
But [illegible] is ſtill new matter of diſtreſs.
O Tancred, ceaſe to perſecute me more!
O grudge me not ſome calm [illegible] ſtate of [illegible]

Some

Some quiet gloom to ſhade my hopeleſs days,
Where I may never hear of love and thee——
Has Laura too conſpir'd againſt my peace?
Why did you take this letter?——Bear it back——
[*Giving her the letter.*]
I will not court new pain.

Laur. Madam, Rodolpho
Urg'd me ſo much, nay, even with tears conjur'd me,
But this once more to ſerve th' unhappy king——
For ſuch he ſaid he was——that tho' enrag'd,
Equal with thee, at his inhuman falſehood,
I could not to my brother's fervent prayers
Refuſe this office——Read it——His excuſes
Will only more expoſe his falſehood.

Sigiſ. No.
It ſuits not Oſmond's wife to read one line
From that contagious hand—ſhe knows too well!

Laur. He paints him out diſtreſs'd beyond expreſſion,
Even on the point of madneſs. Wild as winds,
And fighting ſeas, he raves. His paſſions mix,
With ceaſeleſs rage, all in each giddy moment.
He dies to ſee you and to clear his faith.

Sigiſ. Save me from that!—That would be worſe
than all!

Laur. I by[illegible] my brother's wo[illegible]; who then
Began to talk of ſome dark impoſture
That had deceiv'd us all: when, interrupted,
We heard your father and Earl Oſmond near
As ſummon'd to Conſtantia's court they went.

Sigiſ. Ha! [illegible] Well!—I am [illegible]

To be, o'er all my ſex, the wretch of love,
In vain I would reſiſt—Give me the letter——
To know the worſt is ſome relief——Alas!
It was not thus, with ſuch dire palpitations,
That, Tancred, once I us'd to read thy letters.
[*Attempting to read the letter, but gives it to Laura.*]
Ah, fond remembrance blinds me!—Read it, Laura.

LAURA *reads.*

"Deliver me, Sigiſmunda, from that moſt exquiſite miſery which a faithful heart can ſuffer—To be thought baſe by her, from whoſe eſteem even virtue borrows new charms. When I ſubmitted to my cruel ſituation, it was not falſehood you beheld, but an exceſs of love. Rather than endanger that, I for a while gave up my honour. Every moment till I ſee you ſtabs me with ſeverer pangs than real guilt itſelf can feel. Let me then conjure you to meet me in the garden, towards the cloſe of the day, when I will explain this myſtery. We have been moſt inhumanely abuſed; and that by the means of the very paper which I gave you, from the warmeſt ſincerity of love, to aſſure to you the heart and hand of

TANCRED."

Sigiſ. There, Laura, there, the dreadful ſecret ſprung!
That paper! ah that paper! it ſuggeſts
A [illegible] horrid thoughts—I to my father
Gave it, and he perhaps [illegible] not [illegible]

A look that way—if yet indeed you love me,
O blaſt me not, kind Tancred, with the truth!
O pitying keep me ignorant for ever!
What ſtrange peculiar miſery is mine?
Reduc'd to wiſh the man I love were falſe!
Why was I hurry'd to a ſtep ſo raſh?
Repairleſs woe:——I might have waited, ſure,
A few ſhort hours—No duty that forbade——
I ow'd thy love that juſtice; till this day
Thy love an image of all-perfect goodneſs!
A beam from Heaven that glow'd with every virtue!
And have I thrown this prize of life away?
The piteous wreck of one diſtracted moment?
Ah the cold prudence of remorſeleſs age!
Ah parents, traitors to your children's bliſs!
Ah curs'd, ah blind revenge!—On every hand
I was betray'd—You, Laura, too, betray'd me!—

Laur. Who, who, but he, whate'er he writes, betray'd you?
Or falſe or puſillanimous. For once,
I will with you ſuppoſe, that his agreement
To the king's will was forg'd—Tho' forg'd by whom?
Your father ſcorns the crime. Yet what avails it?
This, if it [illegible] his truth, condemns [illegible] is ſpirit.
A [illegible] king, by love and [illegible] fir'd,
Patient [illegible] on his inſulted throne,
And [illegible] outrage, of ſo high a nature,
Unpuniſh'd paſs, uncheck'd, uncontradicted—
O 'tis a [illegible] equal [illegible] falſehood!

Sigiſ. Laura, no more—We have already judg'd

Too largely without knowledge. Oft, what ſeems
A trifle, a mere nothing, by itſelf,
In ſome nice ſituations, turns the ſcale
Of fate, and rules the moſt important actions.
Yes, I begin to feel a ſad preſage:
I am undone from that eternal ſource
Of human woes—The judgement of the paſſions.
But what have I to do with theſe excuſes?
O ceaſe, my treacherous heart, to give them room!
It ſuits not thee to plead a lover's cauſe;
Even to lament my fate is now dishonour.
Nought now remains, but with relentleſs purpoſe
To ſhun all interviews, all clearing up
Of this dark ſcene; to wrap myſelf in gloom,
In ſolitude and ſhades; there to devour
The ſilent ſorrows ever ſwelling here;
And ſince I muſt be wretched—for I muſt—
To claim the mighty miſery myſelf,
Engroſs it all, and ſpare a hapleſs father.
Hence let me fly!——the hour approaches——
Laur. Madam,
Behold he comes——the king——
Sig. Heavens! how eſcape?
No—I will ſtay—This one laſt meeting—Leave me.

SCENE

SCENE II.

TANCRED, SIGISMUNDA.

Tanc. And are theſe long long hours of torture paſt?
My life! my Sigiſmunda!
[*Throwing himſelf at her feet.*]

Sigiſ. Riſe, my lord.
To ſee my ſovereign thus no more becomes me.

Tanc. O let me kiſs the ground on which you tread!
Let me exhale my ſoul in ſofteſt tranſport!
Since I again embrace my Sigiſmunda! [*Riſing.*]
Unkind! how couldſt thou ever deem me falſe?
How thus diſhonour love? O I could much
Embitter my complaint!—How low were then
Thy thoughts of me? How didſt thou then affront
The human heart itſelf? After the vows,
The fervent truth, the tender proteſtations,
Which mine has often pour'd, to let thy breaſt,
Whate'er th' appearance was, admit ſuſpicion?

Sigiſ. How! when I heard myſelf your [illegible] conſent
To the [illegible] king's ſo juſt and prudent will?
He'd [illegible] in ſolemn ſenate?
Which [illegible] you give your royal hand,
To [illegible] birth and dignity, of right,
Demand [illegible] high alliance [illegible], my lord,
You have done well. The [illegible], whom Heaven appoints
To govern [illegible] muſt learn

To bend his paſſions to the ſway of reaſon.
In all you have done well; but when you bid
My humbled hopes look up to you again,
And ſooth'd with wanton cruelty my weakneſs—
That too was well—My vanity deſerv'd
The ſharp rebuke, whoſe fond extravagance
Could ever dream to balance your repoſe,
Your glory and the welfare of a people.

Tanc. Chide on, chide on. Thy ſoft reproaches now,
Inſtead of wounding, only ſoothe my fondneſs.
No, no, thou charming conſort of my ſoul!
I never lov'd thee with ſuch faithful ardor,
As in that cruel miſerable moment
You thought me falſe; when even my honour ſtoop'd
To wear for thee a baffled face of baſeneſs,
It was thy barbarous father, Sigiſmunda,
Who caught me in the toil. He turn'd that paper,
Meant for th' aſſuring bond of nuptial love,
To ruin it for ever; he, he wrote
That forg'd conſent, you heard, beneath my name;
Nay, dar'd before my outrag'd throne to read it!
Had he not been thy father——Ha! my love!
You tremble, you grow pale.

Sigiſ. Oh leave me, Tancred!

Tanc. No!—Leave thee!—Never [illegible] till
[illegible]
My heart [illegible] peace, till theſe dear lips [illegible]
Pronounce [illegible] mine. Without thee [illegible]
Myſelf, my friends, the world—Here [illegible] hand

Sigiſ.

Sigif. My lord, forget that hand, which never now
Can be to thine united——
Tanc. Sigiſmunda!
What doſt thou mean? Thy words, thy look, thy manner
Seem to conceal ſome horrid ſecret——heavens!——
No—That was wild—diſtraction fires the thought!—
Sigif. Inquire no more——I never can be thine.
Tanc. What, who ſhall interpoſe? who dares attempt
To brave the fury of an injur'd king?
Who, ere he ſees thee raviſh'd from his hopes,
Will wrap all blazing Sicily in flames——
Sigif. In vain your power, my lord—This fatal error
Join'd to my father's unrelenting will,
Has plac'd an everlaſting bar betwixt us——
I am—Earl Oſmond's——wife.
Tanc. Earl Oſmond's wife!——

[*After a long pauſe, during which they look at one another with the higheſt agitation and moſt tender diſtreſs.*]

[ty'd?
Heavens! did I hear thee right! what marry'd? mar-
Loſt to thy faithful Tancred! loſt for ever!
Couldſt thou then doom me to ſuch matchleſs woe,
Without [illegible] hearing me?—Diſtraction!—
Alas! [illegible] has thou done? Ah, Sigiſmunda!—
Thy ra[illegible]redulity has done [illegible]
Which [illegible] happ[illegible] lovers—[illegible]
[illegible]ful power[illegible] made [illegible]niſh'd wretches!
But

But—madneſs!—Sure, thou know'ſt it cannot be!
This hand is mine! a thouſand thouſand vows——

SCENE III.

TANCRED, OSMOND, SIGISMUNDA.

Oſm. [*Snatching her hand from the king.*] Madam, this hand, by the moſt ſolemn rites,
A little hour ago, was given to me:
And did not ſovereign honour now command me,
Never but with my life to quit my claim,
I would renounce it—thus!

Tanc. Ha! who art thou!
Preſumptuous man?

Sigiſ. [*aſide.*] Where is my father? heavens! [*Goes out.*]

Oſm. One thou ſhouldſt better know—Yes—view me——one!
Who can and will maintain his rights and honour,
Againſt a faithleſs prince, an upſtart king,
Whoſe firſt baſe deed is what a harden'd tyrant
Would bluſh to act.

Tanc. Inſolent Oſmond! know,
This upſtart king will hurl confuſion on thee,
And all who ſhall invade his ſacred rights,
Prior to [illegible]——Thine founded on [illegible],
Or infamous deceit; while his proceed
From [illegible] love and free long-pleighted [illegible]
She is, and ſhall be mine!—[illegible] will [illegible]

By

By the high power with which the laws inveſt me,
Thoſe guilty forms in which you have entrap'd,
Baſely entrap'd, to thy deteſted nuptials,
My queen betroth'd; who has my heart, my hand,
And ſhall partake my throne——If, haughty lord,
If this thou didſt not know, then know it now!
And know beſides, as I have told thee this,
Shouldſt thou but think to urge thy treaſon further—
Than treaſon more! treaſon againſt my love!———
Thy life ſhall anſwer for it!

Oſm. Ha! my life—
It moves my ſcorn to hear thy empty threats.
When was it that a Norman baron's life
Became ſo vile, as on the frown of kings
To hang?—Of that, my lord, the law muſt judge;
Or if the law be weak, my guardian ſword———

Tanc. Dare not to touch it, traitor! leſt my rage
Break looſe, and do a deed that miſbecomes me.

SCENE IV.

TANCRED, SIFFREDI, OSMOND.

Siff. [*entering*] My gracious lord! what is it I behold!
My ſovereign in contention with his ſubjects?
Such [illegible] houſe deſerves from royal Tancred
A little more regard than to be made
A ſcene of trouble and unſeemly jars.
It grieves my ſoul, confounds [illegible]

It makes me ſick of life, to ſee thy glory
Thus blaſted in the bud—Heavens! can your highneſs
From your exalted character deſcend,
The dignity of virtue; and, inſtead
Of being the protector of our rights,
The holy guardian of domeſtic bliſs,
Unkindly thus diſturb the ſweet repoſe,
The ſacred peace of families, for which
Alone the free-born race of man to laws
And government ſubmitted?

Tanc. My lord Siffredi,
Spare thy rebuke. The duties of my ſtation
Are not to me unknown—But thou, old man,
Doſt thou not bluſh to talk of rights invaded?
And of our beſt, our deareſt bliſs diſturb'd?
Thou! who with more than barbarous perfidy
Haſt trampled all allegiance, juſtice, truth,
Humanity itſelf, beneath thy feet?
Thou know'ſt thou haſt——I could to thy confuſion,
Return thy hard reproaches; but I ſpare thee
Before this lord, for whoſe ill-ſorted friendſhip
Thou haſt moſt baſely ſacrific'd thy daughter.
Farewel, my lord!—For thee, lord conſtable,
Who doſt preſume to lift thy ſurly eye
To my ſoft love, my gentle Sigiſmunda,
I once again command thee, on thy life——
Nay, curb thy rage—but mark me—on thy life,
No further urge thy arrogant pretenſions!

SCENE V.

SIFFREDI, OSMOND.

Ha! arrogant pretenſions! heaven and earth!
What! arrogant pretenſions to my wife?
My wedded wife! Where are we? In a land
Of civil power, of liberty and laws?———
Not on my life purſue them?—Giddy prince!
My life diſdains thy nod. It is the gift
Of parent heaven, who gave me too an arm,
A ſpirit to defend it againſt tyrants.
The Norman race, the ſons of mighty Rollo,
Who ruſhing in a tempeſt from the north,
Great nurſe of generous freemen! bravely won
With their own ſwords their ſeats, and ſtill poſſeſs them
By the ſame noble tenure, are not us'd
To hear ſuch language——If I now deſiſt;
Then brand me for a coward, deem me villain!
A traitor to the public! by this conduct
Deceiv'd, betray'd, inſulted, tyrannid'd,
More is a common cauſe. My [illegible] guard,
[illegible] with my own, the rights [illegible],
[illegible] ſocial life, and of mankind [illegible]
Ere to thy tyrant rage they fall a [illegible]
Shall find [illegible] make thy [illegible] throne,
Which this [illegible] perſ[illegible]

[illegible]

Forfeits at once, and crush thee in the ruins!——
Constantia is my queen!

Siff. Lord constable,
Let us be stedfast in the right; but let us
Act with cool prudence, and with manly temper,
As well as manly firmness. True, I own,
The indignities you suffer are so high,
As might even justify what now you threaten.
But if, my lord, we can prevent the woes,
The cruel horrors of intestine war,
Yet hold untouch'd our liberties and laws;
O let us, rais'd above the turbid sphere
Of little selfish passions, nobly do it!
Nor to our hot intemp'rate pride pour out
A dire libation of Sicilian blood.
'Tis godlike magnanimity, to keep,
When most provok'd, our reason calm and clear,
And execute her will from a strong sense
Of what is right, without the vulgar aid
Of heat and passion, which, tho' honest, bear us
Often too far. Remember that my house
Protects my daughter still; and ere I saw her
Thus ravish'd from us by the arm of power,
This hand should act the Roman father's part.
Fear not; be temperate; all will yet be well.
I know the king. At first his passions burst
Quick as the light'ning's flash: but in his breast
Honour and justice dwell.——Trust me, to reason
He will return.

Opit. He will [illegible] by heavens, [illegible] shall!

You

You know the king!—I wiſh, my lord Siffredi,
That you had deign'd to tell me all you knew—
And would you have me wait, with duteous patience,
Till he return to reaſon? Ye juſt powers!
When he has planted on our necks his foot.
And trod us into ſlaves; when his vain pride
Is cloy'd with our ſubmiſſion; if, at laſt,
He finds his arm too weak to ſhake the frame
Of wide-eſtabliſh'd order out of joint,
And overturn all juſtice; then, perchance,
He, in a fit of ſickly kind repentance,
May make a merit to return to reaſon.
No, no, my lord!—There is a nobler way,
To teach the blind oppreſſive *Fury* reaſon:
Oft has the luſtre of avenging ſteel
Unſeal'd her ſtupid eyes—The ſword is reaſon!

SCENE VI.

SIFFREDI, OSMOND, RODOLPHO, *with guards.*

Rod. My lord high-conſtable of Sicily,
In the king's name, and by his ſpecial order,
I here arreſt you priſoner of ſtate.
Oſm. What king? I know no king of Sicily—
Unleſs he be the [illegible] of Conſtantia.
Rod. Then [illegible] now—[illegible] his royal orders,
To bear you [illegible] of P[illegible]o.
Siff. [illegible] its madneſs off.

Submit

Submit, my lord.—No caſtle long can hold
Our wrongs—This, more than friendſhip or alliance,
Confirms me thine; this binds me to thy fortunes,
By the ſtrong tie of common injury,
Which nothing can diſſolve——I grieve, Rodolpho,
To ſee the reign in ſuch unhappy ſort
Begin.

Oſm. The reign! the uſurpation call it!
This meteor-king may blaze a-while, but ſoon
Muſt ſpend his idle terrors——Sir, lead on——
Farewel, my lord—More than my life and fortune,
Remember well, is in your hands—my honour!

Siff. Our honour is the ſame. My ſon, farewell—
We ſhall not long be parted.—On theſe eyes
Sleep ſhall not ſhed his balm, till I behold thee
Reſtor'd to freedom, or partake thy bonds.
Even noble courage is not void of blame,
Till nobler patience ſanctifies its flame.

The End of the fourth Act.

ACT V. SCENE I.

SIFFREDI, *alone.*

THE prospect lowrs around. I found the king,
Tho' calm'd a little, with subsiding tempest
As suits his generous nature, yet in love
Abated nought, most ardent in his purpose;
Inexorably fix'd, whate'er the risk,
To claim my daughter, and dissolve this marriage.—
I have embark'd upon a perilous sea,
A mighty treasure. Here the rapid youth,
Th' impetuous passions of a lover-king
Check my bold course; and there the jealous pride,
Th' impatient honour of a haughty lord
Of the first rank, in interest and dependents
Near equal to the king, forbid retreat.
My honour too, the same unchanged conviction,
That these my measures were, and still remain
Of absolute necessity, to save
The land from [illegible] fury, urge me on.
But how [illegible] only faster [illegible]
Upon [illegible] desperate [illegible] shun.

Whate'er the motive be, deceit, I fear,
And harſh unnatural force are not the means
Of public welfare or of private bliſs——
Bear witneſs, Heavens! Thou mind inſpecting eye!
My breaſt is pure. I have prefer'd my duty,
The good and ſafety of my fellow ſubjects,
To all thoſe views that fire the ſelfiſh race
Of men, and mix them in eternal broils.

[*Enter an officer belonging to* SIFFREDI.]

Off. My lord, a man of noble port, his face
Wrap'd in diſguiſe, is earneſt for admiſſion.

Siff. Go, bid him enter. [*Officer goes out.*]
Ha! wrap'd in diſguiſe!
And at this late unſeaſonable hour!
When o'er the world tremenduous midnight reigns,
By the dire gloom of raging tempeſt doubled.——

SCENE II.

SIFFREDI, OSMOND, *diſcovering himſelf.*

Siff. What! ha! Earl Oſmond, you?—Welcome, once more,
To this glad roof!——But why in this diſguiſe?
Would I could ſee the king exceeds his promiſe!
I have his faith for as to-morrow's ſun,
Shall gild Sicily's cliffs, you ſhall be free.—
Has ſome good angel turn'd his heart to juſtice?

Oſm. It is not by the favour of [illegible] Tancred
That I am here. As much I ſcorn his power,

As I defy his tyranny and threats——
Our friend Goffredo, who commands the caſtle,
On my parole, ere dawn to render back
My perſon, has permitted me this freedom.
Know then; the faithleſs outrage of to-day,
By him committed whom you call the king,
Has rouz'd Conſtantia's court. Our friends, the friends
Of virtue, juſtice, and of public faith,
Ripe for revolt, are in high ferment all.
This, this, they ſay, exceeds whate'er deform'd
The miſerable days we ſaw beneath
William the Bad. This ſaps the ſolid baſe,
At once of government and private life;
This ſhameleſs impoſition on the faith,
The majeſty of ſenates, this lewd inſult,
This violation of the rights of men.
Added to theſe, his ignominious treatment
Of her th' illuſtrious offspring of our kings,
Sicilia's hope, and now our royal miſtreſs,
You know, my lord, how groſsly theſe infringe
The late king's will; which orders, if Count Tancred
Make not Conſtantia [illegible] of his throne,
That he be quite excluded the [illegible],
And ſhe to [illegible] given, king [illegible] Romans,
The [illegible] Barbaroſſa [illegible]
Who feel [illegible] inſtance [illegible].
I thence [illegible] guardian of [illegible] laws,
As guardian of this [illegible] uſtruſted,

Deſire, nay more, demand, your inſtant aid,
To ſee it put in vigorous execution.
Siff. You cannot doubt, my lord, of my concurrence.
Who more than I have laboured this great point?
'Tis my own plan. And, if I drop it now,
I ſhould be juſtly branded with the ſhame
Of rath advice or deſpicable weakneſs.
But let us not precipitate the matter.
Conſtantia's friends are numerous and ſtrong;
Yet Tancred's, truſt me, are of equal force.
E'er ſince the ſecret of his birth was known,
The people all are in a tumult hurl'd
Of boundleſs joy, to hear there lives a prince
Of mighty Guiſcard's line. Numbers, beſides,
Of powerful barons, who at heart had pined,
To ſee the reign of their renowned forefathers,
Won by immortal deeds of matchleſs valour,
Paſs from the gallant Normans to the Suevi,
Will, with a kind of rage, eſpouſe his cauſe——
'Tis ſo, my lord—be not by paſſion blinded——
'Tis ſurely ſo.—O if our prating virtue
Dwells not in words alone——O let us join,
My generous Osmond, to avert [illegible]
And yet ſuſtain our tottering Norman kingdom!
Osm. But how, Siffredi? how?—[illegible]
We can maintain our rights, and ſave [illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]

But it requires an awful flight of virtue,
Above the paffions of the vulgar breaft,
And thence from thee I hope it, noble Ofmond—
Suppofe my daughter, to her God devoted,
Were plac'd within fome convent's facred verge,
Beneath the dread protection of the altar———

Ofm. Ere then, by heavens! I would devoutly fhave
My holy fcalp, turn whining monk myfelf,
And pray inceffant for the tyrant's fafety!
What! How! becaufe an infolent invader,
A facrilegious tyrant, in contempt
Of all thofe nobleft rights, which to maintain
Is man's peculiar pride, demands my wife;
That I fhall thus betray the common caufe
Of human kind, and tamely yield her up,
Even in the manner you propofe—O then
I were fupremely vile! degraded! fhamed!
The fcorn of manhood! and abhor'd of honour!

Siff. There is, my lord, an honour, the calm child
Of reafon, of humanity and mercy,
Superior far to this punctilious demon,
That fingly minds itfelf, and oft embroils
With proud barbarian niceties the world!

Ofm. My lord, my lord!——I cannot brook your prudence—
It holds a [illegible] unequal to my blood——
Unblem[illegible] is the [illegible] of virtue!
The vivifying foul [illegible] it

Will leave the other dull and liſeleſs droſs.

Siff. No more—You are too warm.

Oſm. You are too cool.

Siff. Too cool, my lord? I were indeed too cool,
Not to reſent this language, and to tell thee—
I wiſh Earl Oſmond were as cool as I
To his own ſelfiſh bliſs—ay, and as warm
To that of others—But of this no more—
My daughter is thy wife—I gave her to thee,
And will againſt all force maintain her thine.
But think not I will catch thy headlong paſſions,
Whirl'd in a blaze of madneſs o'er the land;
Or, till the laſt extremity compel me,
Riſk the dire means of war—The king to-morrow
Will ſet you free; and, if by gentle means
He does not yield my daughter to your arms,
And wed Conſtantia, as the will requires,
Why then expect me on the ſide of juſtice——
Let that ſuffice.

Oſm. It does——Forgive my heat.
My rankled mind, by injuries inflam'd,
May be too prompt to take and give offence.

Siff. 'Tis paſt'd—Your wrongs, I own, may well
transport
The wiſeſt mind—But henceforth, noble Oſmond,
Do me more juſtice, honour more my truth,
Nor mark me with an eye of ſquint ſuſpicion——
Theſe jars apart—You may repoſe your ſoul
On my firm faith and unremitting friendſhip.
All that I ſure have [illegible]

And

And the next ſun we ſee ſhall prove it further—
Return, my ſon, and from your friend Goffredo
Releaſe your word. There try, by ſoft repoſe,
To calm your breaſt.

Oſm. Bid the vext ocean ſleep,
Swept by the pinions of the raging north——
But your frail age, by care and toil exhauſted,
Demands the balm of all-repairing reſt.

Siff. Soon as to-morrow's dawn ſhall break the ſkies,
I, with my friends in ſolemn ſtate aſſembled,
Will to the palace, and demand your freedom.
Then by calm reaſon, or by higher means,
The king ſhall quit his claim, and in the face
Of Sicily, my daughter ſhall be yours.
Farewel.

Oſm. My lord, good night.

SCENE III.

OSMOND *alone.* [*After a long pauſe.*]

I like him not——
Yes—I have mighty matter of ſuſpicion.
'Tis plain—I ſee it lurking in his breaſt,
He has a fooliſh fondneſs for this king——
My honour is not ſafe, while here my wife
Remains—Who knows but he this very night
May bear her to ſome concent, as he mention'd——
The king [illegible] I ſmother'd up my rage,
I mark'd [illegible]——will ſet me free to-morrow.

Why

Why not to-night? He has ſome dark deſign——
By heavens! he has—I am abus'd moſt groſsly;
Made the vile tool of this old ſtateſman's ſchemes;
Marry'd to one—ay, and he knew it—one
Who loves young Tancred! Hence her ſwooning, tears,
And all her ſoft diſtreſs, when ſhe diſgrac'd me
By baſely giving her perfidious hand
Without her heart—Hell and perdition! this,
This is the perfidy!—This is the fell,
The keen, envenom'd, exquiſite diſgrace!
Which to a man of honour even exceeds
The falſehood of the perſon—But I now
Will rouſe me from the poor tame lethargy,
By my believing fondneſs caſt upon me.
I will not wait his crawling timid motions,
Perhaps to blind me meant, which he to-morrow
Has promis'd to purſue. No! ere his eyes
Shall open on to-morrow's orient beam,
I will convince him that Earl Oſmond never
Was form'd to be his dupe—I know full well
Th' important weight and danger of the deed:
But to a man, whom greater dangers preſs,
Driven to the brink of infamy and horror,
Raſhneſs itſelf, and utter deſperation,
Are the beſt prudence—I will bear her off
This night, and lodge her in a place of ſafety.
I have a truſty band that wa[illegible]
Hence! let me loſe no time—One rapid moment
Should ardent form, at once, and execute

A bold design—'Tis fix'd—'Tis done!—Yes, then
When I have seiz'd the prize of love and honour,
And with a friend secur'd her; to the castle
I will repair, and claim Goffredo's promise
To rise with all his garrison———my friends
With brave impatience wait. The mine is laid,
And only wants my kindling touch to spring.

SCENE IV.

SIGISMUNDA'S *Apartment.*

SIGISMUNDA, LAURA.

Laur. Heavens! 'tis a fearful night!
Sigis. Ah! the black rage
Of midnight tempest, or th' assuring smiles
Of radiant morn, are equal all to me.
Nought now has charms or terrors to my breast,
The seat of stupid woe!—Leave me, my Laura.
Kind rest, perhaps, may hush my woes a little—
Oh for that quiet sleep that knows no morning.
Laur. Madam, indeed I know not how to go.
Indulge my fondness—Let me watch a while
By your sad bed, till these dread hours shall pass.
Sigis. Alas! what is the toil of elements,
This idle pert[illegible]n of the [illegible]y,
To [illegible] I feel [illegible] [illegible] that the fires
Of pitying [illegible] [illegible] their fury here!
Good [illegible] [illegible] Laura!

Laur.

Laur. Oh I know not
What this oppreſſion means—but 'tis with pain,
With tears, I can perſuade myſelf to leave you—
Well then—Good night, my deareſt Sigiſmunda!

SCENE V.

SIGISMUNDA.

And am I then alone?—The moſt undone,
Moſt wretched being now beneath the cope
Of this affrighting gloom that wraps the world!—
I ſaid I did not fear——Ah me! I feel
A ſhivering horror, run thro' all my powers!
O I am nought but tumult, fears, and weakneſs!
And yet how idle fear, when hope is gone,
Gone, gone for ever!—O thou gentle ſcene
[*Looking towards her bed.*]
Of ſweet repoſe, where by th' oblivious draught
Of each ſad toilſome day, to peace reſtor'd
Unhappy mortals loſe their woes a-while,
Thou haſt no peace for me!—What ſhall I do?
How paſs this dreadful night, ſo big with terror?—
Here, with the midnight ſhades, here will I ſit,
[*Sitting down.*]
A prey to dire deſpair, and ceaſeleſs weep
The hours away—Bleſs me!—I heard a noiſe——
[*Starting up.*]
No—I miſtook—Nor [illegible] ſilence reigns
And awful midnight [illegible] Again!—O Heav'ns!
My Lord the King!

SCENE

SCENE VI.

TANCRED, SIGISMUNDA.

Tanc. Be not alarm'd, my love!
Sigis. My royal lord! why at this midnight-hour,
How came you hither?
Tanc. By that secret way
My love contriv'd, when we, in happier days,
Us'd to devote these hours, so much in vain,
To vows of love and everlasting friendship.
Sigis. Why will you thus persist to add new stings
To her distress, who never can be thine?
O fly me! fly! You know———
Tanc. I know too much.
O how I could reproach thee, Sigismunda!
Pour out my injur'd soul in just complaints!
But now the time permits not, these swift moments—
I told thee how thy father's artifice
Forc'd me to seem perfidious in thine eyes.
Ah, fatal blindness! not to have observ'd
The mingled pangs of rage and love that shook me;
When, by my cruel public situation
Compell'd, I only feign'd consent, to gain
A little time, and more secure thee mine.
E'er since—A [illegible] interval of care!
My thoughts [illegible] been [illegible] not without hope,
How to defeat [illegible] purpose.
But thy cred[illegible] [illegible]'d all,

Thy

Thy rash, thy wild—I know not what to name it—
Oh it has prov'd the giddy hopes of man
To be delusion all, and sickening folly!

Sigis. Ah, generous Tancred! ah thy truth destroys me!
Yes, yes, 'tis I, 'tis I alone am false!
My hasty rage, join'd to my tame submission,
More than the most exalted filial duty
Could e'er demand, has dash'd our cup of fate
With bitterness unequal'd—But, alas!
What are thy woes to mine?—to mine! just Heaven!
Now is thy turn of vengeance—Hate, renounce me!
O leave me to the fate I well deserve,
To sink in hopeless misery!—At least,
Try to forget the worthless Sigismunda!

Tanc. Forget thee! No! Thou art my soul itself!
I have no thought, no hope, no wish, but thee!
Even this repented injury, the fears,
That rouse me all to madness, at the thought
Of losing thee, the whole collected pains
Of my full heart, serve but to make thee dearer!
Ah, how forget thee!—Much must be forgot,
Ere Tancred can forget his Sigismunda!

Sigis. But you, my lord, must make that great effort.

Tanc. Can Sigismunda make it?

Sigis. Ah! I know not
With what success—[illegible] that [illegible] woman,
And love untaught [illegible]
I, to the [illegible] will [illegible]

Tanc. Fear not—'Tis done!—If thou canſt form the thought,
Succeſs is ſure—I am forgot already!
Sigiſ. Ah, Tancred!—But, my lord, reſpect me more.
Think who I am—What can you now propoſe?
Tanc. To claim the plighted vows which Heaven has heard,
To vindicate the rights of holy love,
By faith and honour bound, to which compar'd
Theſe empty forms, which have enſnar'd thy hand,
Are impious guile, abuſe, and profanation——
Nay, as a king, whoſe high prerogative
By this unlicens'd marriage is affronted,
To bid the laws themſelves pronounce it void.
Sigiſ. Honour, my lord, is much too proud to catch
At every ſlender twig of nice diſtinctions.
Theſe for th' unfeeling vulgar may do well:
But thoſe, whoſe ſouls are by the nicer rule
Of virtuous delicacy nobly ſway'd,
Stand at another bar than that of laws.
Then ceaſe to urge me!—Since I am not born
To that exalted fate to be your queen——
Or, yet a dearer name—to be your wife——
I [illegible] the [illegible] of an illuſtrious lord
Of [illegible] blood; and what I am,
I [illegible]
Retire [illegible]
To [illegible]
We [illegible]

Tanc.

Tanc. Oh barbarous Sigiſmunda!
And canſt thou talk thus ſteadily? thus treat me
With ſuch unpitying, unrelenting rigor?
Poor is the love, that rather than give up
A little pride, a little formal pride,
The breath of vanity, can bear to ſee
The man, whoſe heart was once ſo dear to thine,
By many a tender vow ſo mix'd together,
A prey to anguiſh, fury, and diſtraction!
Thou canſt not ſurely make me ſuch a wretch,
Thou canſt not, Sigiſmunda! Yet relent,
O ſave us yet!—Rodolpho, with my guards,
Waits in the garden—Let us ſeize the moments
We ne'er may have again—With more than power
I will aſſert thee mine, with faireſt honour.
The world ſhall even approve; each honeſt boſom
Swell with a kindred joy to ſee us happy.

Sigiſ. The world approve!——What is the world to me?
The conſcious mind is its own awful world.——
And yet, perhaps, if thou wert not a king,
I know not, Tancred, what I might have done.
Then, then my conduct, ſanctify'd by love,
Could not be ſecm'd, by the ſevereſt judge,
The [illegible] effect of intereſt [illegible]
But now [illegible] my partial [illegible]
Shall ever [illegible] ma'terable [illegible]
That tyrannize [illegible]
[illegible] 'Tis well—No [illegible]
I yield me to my fate—[illegible] yes, [illegible]

[illegible] ſince

Since thy barbarian heart is ſteel'd by pride,
Shut up to love and pity, here behold me
Caſt on the ground, a vile and abject wretch!
Loſt to all cares, all dignities, all duties!
Here will I grow, breathe out my faithful ſoul,
Here, at thy feet—Death, death alone ſhall part us!
Sigiſ. Have you then vow'd to drive me to perdition?
What can I more?—Yes, Tancred! once again
I will forget the dignity my ſtation
Commands me to ſuſtain—For the laſt time
Will tell thee, that, I fear, no ties, no duty,
Can ever root thee from my hapleſs boſom.
O leave me! fly me! were it but in pity!
To ſee what once we tenderly have lov'd,
Cut off from every hope—cut off for ever!
Is pain thy generoſity ſhould ſpare me.
Then riſe, my lord; and if you truly love me;
If you reſpect my honour, nay, my peace,
Retire! for tho' th' emotions of my heart
Can ne'er alarm my virtue; yet, alas!
They tear it ſo, they pierce it with ſuch anguiſh—
Oh 'tis too much!—I cannot bear the conflict!

SCENE VII.

[illegible]

Tanc. Inſolent traitor! think not to eſcape
Thyſelf my vengeance! [*They fight. Oſmond falls.*]
Sigiſ. Help here! Help!—O Heavens!
[*Throwing herſelf down by him.*]
Alas! my lord, what meant your headlong rage?
That faith, which I, this day, upon the altar
To you devoted, is unblemiſh'd pure,
As veſtal truth; was reſolutely yours,
Beyond the power of aught on earth to ſhake it.
Oſm. Perfidious woman! die!——
[*Shortening his ſword, he plunges it into her breaſt.*]
And to the grave
Attend a huſband, yet but half aveng'd!
Tanc. O horror! horror! execrable villain!
Oſm. And, tyrant! thou!—Thou ſhalt not o'er my tomb
Exult—'Tis well—'Tis great!—I die content. [*Dies.*]

SCENE VIII.

TANCRED, SIFFREDI, RODOLPHO, SIGISMUNDA, LAURA.

That I am thine again; and, without blame,
May in my Tancred's arms reſign my ſoul!

Tanc. Oh, death is in that voice! ſo gently mild,
So ſadly ſweet, as mixes even with mine
The tears of hovering angels!—Mine again!—
And is it thus the cruel fates have join'd us?
Are theſe the horrid nuptials they prepare
For love like ours? Is virtue thus rewarded?
Let not my impious rage accuſe juſt Heaven!
Thou, Tancred! thou! haſt murder'd Sigiſmunda!
That furious man was but the tool of fate,
I, I the cauſe!—But I will do thee juſtice
On this deaf heart! that to thy tender wiſdom
Refus'd an ear—Yes, death ſhall ſoon unite us!

Sigiſ. Live, live, my Tancred!—Let my death
ſuffice
To expiate all that may have been amiſs.
May it appeaſe the fates, avert their fury
From thy propitious reign! Mean time, of me
And of thy glory mindful, live, I charge thee,
To guard our friends, and make thy people hap[py]

[Seeing Siffredi fixt in aſtoniſhment and grief.]

My father!—ah! how ſhall I lift my eyes

My poor afflicted father's age——Rodolpho,
Now is the time to watch th' unhappy king,
With all the care and tenderness of friendship—
Oh my dear father! bow'd beneath the weight
Of age and grief—the victim even of virtue,
Receive my last adieu! Where art thou, Tancred?
Give me thy hand——But ah! it cannot save me
From the dire king of terrors, whose cold powers
Creeps o'er my heart——Oh!

Tanc. How these pangs distract me;
O lift thy gracious eyes!—Thou leav'st me then!
Thou leav'st me, Sigismunda!

Sigis. Yet a moment——
I had, my Tancred, something more to say——
Yes——But thy love and tenderness for me
Sure makes it needless——Harbour no resentment
Against my father; venerate his zeal,
That acted from a principle of goodness,
From faithful love to thee—Live and maintain
My innocence imbalm'd, with holiest care
Preserve my spotless memory!——I die——
ETERNAL MERCY take my trembling soul!
Oh! 'tis the only sting of death to part
From those we love—from thee—farewell my Tan-
cred [illegible]

Tanc. [illegible] then!

[illegible] *Rodolpho*]

[illegible]

Tanc. Off! ſet me free! Think not to bind me down,
With barbarous friendſhip, to the rack of life!
What hand can ſhut the thouſand thouſand gates,
Which death ſtill opens to the woes of mortals?——
I ſhall find means——No power in earth or heaven
Can force me to endure the hateful light,
Thus robb'd of all that lent it joy and ſweetneſs!
Off! traitors! off! or my diſtracted ſoul
Will burſt indignant from this jail of nature,
To where ſhe beckons yonder——No, mild ſeraph!
Point not to life——I cannot linger here,
Cut off from thee, the miſerable pity,
The ſcorn of human kind!—A trampled king!
Who let his mean poor hearted love, one moment,
To coward prudence ſtoop; who made it not
The firſt undoubting action of his reign,
To ſnatch thee to his throne, and there to ſhield thee,
Thy helpleſs boſom from a ruffian's fury!——
O ſhame! O agony! O the fell ſtings
Of late, of vain repentance!—Ha! my brain
Is all no fire! a wild abyſs of thought!—
Th[illegible] infernal world diſcloſes! See! behold him!
Lo! with fierce ſmiles he ſhakes the bloody ſteel,
And [illegible] my feeble tears!—Hence quickly! hence!
Spurn [illegible] carcaſe! give it to the dogs!
Expoſe it to the winds and ſcreaming ravens!
Or [illegible] it down [illegible]
There with [illegible]
Ah! impo[illegible] of rage!—What am I!—Where!

Sad,

Sad, silent, all?—The forms of dumb despair,
Around some mournful tomb! What do I see?
This soft abode of innocence and love
Turn'd to the house of death! a place of horror!—
Ah! that poor corse! pale! pale! deform'd with murder?
Is that my Sigismunda!

[*Throwing himself down by her.*]

SIFFREDI.

[*After a pathetic pause, looking on the scene before him.*]

Have I liv'd
To these enfeebled years, by Heav'n reserv'd,
To be a dreadful monument of justice?——
Rodolpho, raise the king, and bear him hence
From this distracting scene of blood and death.
Alas! I dare not give him my assistance;
My care would only more enflame his rage.

Behold the fatal work of my dark hand,
That by rude force the passions would command,
That ruthless sought to root them from the breast;
They may be rul'd, but will not be opprest.
Taught hence, ye parents, who from nature stray,
And the great ties of social life betray;
Ne'er with your children act a tyrant's part:
'Tis yours to guide, not violate the heart.
Ye vainly wise, who o'er mankind preside,
Behold my [illegible] woes, and drop your pride;
Keep virtue's [illegible] before your eyes,
Nor think [illegible] good can [illegible].

The End of the Fifth Act.

E P I L O G U E.

Spoken by Miſs BUDGEL.

CRAMM'D to the throat with wholeſome moral ſtuff,
Alas! poor audience! you have had enough.
Was ever helpleſs heroine of a play
In ſuch a piteous plight as ours to-day?
Was ever woman ſo by love betray'd?
Match'd with two huſbands, and yet—die a maid.
But bleſs me!—hold—What ſounds are theſe I hear!—
I ſee the tragic Muſe herſelf appear.

The back-ſcene opens, and diſcovers a romantic Sylvan landſkip; from which Mrs Cibber, in the character of the tragic Muſe, advances ſlowly to muſic, and ſpeaks the following lines.

Hence with your flippant Epilogue, that tries
To wipe the virtuous tear from Britiſh eyes;
That dares my moral, tragic ſcenes profane,
With ſtrains—at beſt, un[illegible] [illegible]ain.
Hence from the pure un[illegible]
In yon fair eyes where virtue ſhines—Away!

Britons,

Britons, *to you from chaſte* Caſtalian *groves,*
Where dwell the tender, oft unhappy loves;
Where ſhades of heroes roam, each mighty name,
And court my aid to riſe again to fame;
To you I come, to freedom's nobleſt ſeat,
And in Britannia *fix my laſt retreat.*
In Greece *and* Rome, *I watch'd the public weal;*
The purple-tyrant trembled at my ſteel:
Nor did I leſs o'er private ſorrows reign,
And mend the melting heart with ſofter pain.
On France *and* You *then roſe my bright'ning ſtar,*
With ſocial ray—The Arts *are ne'er at war.*
O as your fire and genius ſtronger blaze,
As yours are generous freedom's bolder lays,
Let not the Gallic *taſte leave yours behind,*
In decent manners and in life refin'd:
Baniſh the motely mode, to tag low verſe,
The laughing ballad to the mournful herſe.
When thro' five acts your hearts have learn'd to glow,
Touch'd with the ſacred force of honeſt woe:
O keep the dear impreſſion on your breaſt,
Nor idly loſe it for a wretched jeſt.

CORIOLANUS.

A TRAGEDY.

PROLOGUE.

Written by the Hon. GEORGE LYTTLETON, Esq.

Spoken by Mr QUIN.

I COME not here your candor to implore
For scenes, whose author is, alas! no more;
He wants no advocate his cause to plead;
You will yourselves be patrons of the dead.
No party his benevolence confin'd,
No sect——Alike it flow'd to all mankind.
He lov'd his friends (forgive this gushing tear:
Alas! I feel I am no actor here)
He lov'd his friends with such a warmth of heart,
So clear of int'rest, so [illegible] of art,
Such generous freedom, such unshaken zeal,
No words [illegible] speak [illegible] but our tears may tell.——
O candid truth! O faith without a stain!
O manners gently [illegible], and nobly plain!

O ſympathiſing love of others bliſs!
Where will you find another breaſt like his?
Such was the man—The poet well you know:
Oft has he touch'd your hearts with tender woe:
Oft in this crouded houſe, with juſt applauſe
You heard him teach fair virtue's pureſt laws;
For his chaſte Muſe employ'd her heav'n-taught lyre
None but the nobleſt paſſions to inſpire,
Not one immoral, one corrupted thought,
One line, which dying he could wiſh to blot.
Oh, may to night your favourable doom
Another laurel add to grace his tomb:
Whilſt he, ſuperior now to praiſe or blame,
Hears not the feeble voice of human fame,
Yet if to thoſe whom moſt on earth he lov'd,
From whom his pious care is now remov'd,
With whom his liberal hand, and bounteous heart,
Shar'd all his little fortune could impart;
If to thoſe friends your kind regard ſhall give
What they no longer can from his receive,
That, that, even now, above yon ſtarry pole,
May touch with pleaſure his immortal ſoul.

The

The PERSONS.

CAIUS MARCIUS CORIOLANUS,	Mr. Quin.
ATTIUS TULLUS, General of the Volſcian army,	Mr. Ryan.
GALESUS, one of the deputies of the Volſcian ſtates attending the camp,	Mr. Delane.
The other deputies of the Volſcian ſtates.	
VOLUSIUS, one of the principal Volſcian officers,	Mr. Sparks.
TITUS, freedman of Galeſus,	Mr Ridout.
MARCUS MINUCIUS, conſul and principal of the deputation from Rome to Coriolanus,	Mr. Bridgwater.
POSTHUMUS COMINIUS, a conſular ſenator, one of the deputation, and who had been the Roman general at the taking of Corioli,	Mr. Anderſon.
VETURIA, mother of Coriolanus,	Mrs. Woffington.
VOLUMNIA, wife of Coriolanus,	Miſs Bellamy.

Roman ſenators, prieſts, augurs, &c. of the firſt deputation. Roman ladies, of the train of Veturia and Volumnia, of the ſecond deputation.

Volſcian Officers, Lictors, Soldiers, &c.

SCENE, The Volſcian Camp.

CORIOLANUS.

A TRAGEDY.

ACT I. SCENE I.

The VOLSCIAN *Camp.*

ATTIUS, TULLUS, VOLUSIUS.

VOLUSIUS.

WHence is it, Tullus, that our arms are slept
Now on the borders of the Roman state?
Why sleeps that spirit of heroic ardor,
Urg'd you to break the truce, and pour'd our host,
From all th' united nations of the Volsci,

On their unguarded frontier? Such designs
Brook not an hour's delay; their whole success
Depends on instant vigorous execution.

Tul. Volusius, I approve thy brave impatience;
And will to thee, in confidence of friendship,
Disclose my secret soul. Thou know'st Galesus,
Whose freedom Caius Marcius, once his guest,
Of all the spoil of sack'd Corioli,
Alone demanded; and who thence to Rome,
From gratitude and friendship, follow'd Marcius;
Whence lately to our Antium he return'd,
With overtures of peace propos'd by Rome.

Vol. I know him well, an antiquated sage
Of that romantic school Pythagoras
Establish'd here on our Hesperian shore;
Whose gentle dictates only serve to tame
Enfeebled mortals into slaves.

Tul. Galesus,
Doubtless, possesses many civil virtues;
Is gentle, good; for rectitude of heart,
And innocence of life, by all rever'd.

Vol. Pardon me, Tullus, if my faithful plainness
Deems you too lib'ral in his praise. In peace
Such may perhaps do well, when prudence [illegible]
An idle world; but in tempestuous [illegible]
They are stark naught, these visior[illegible] statesmen,
Fit rulers only for [illegible] golden age.
The rugg[illegible] genius of re[illegible] Rome
For other men, and other [illegible], calls.

Tul.

Tul. Your thoughts are mine——I only meant to tell thee
The part he bears in this ill-tim'd delay.
Soon as our gather'd army march'd from Antium,
The Roman ſenate, whoſe attentive caution
Watch'd all our motions, took at once th' alarm;
And ſent a herald, ere we paſt their borders,
With formal ceremony, to demand
The cauſe of our approach——Had I been maſter,
I would have anſwer'd at the gates of Rome.
But this Galeſus, who attends our camp
Among the Volſcian deputies, ſo pleaded
The laws of nations, made ſuch loud complaints
Againſt th' infraction of the public faith,
So teaz'd us with the pedantry of ſtates,
That I was forc'd, unwilling, to permit
His freedman Titus, to be ſent to Rome
With our demands. If theſe the ſenate grants
We then are in the toils of peace entangled,
In ſpite of all my efforts to avoid them.

Vol. O 'tis a wild chimera! Peace with Rome!
Dream not of that, unleſs the Volſcian courage
Is quite ſubdu'd, and only ſeeks to gild
A vile ſubmiſſion with that ſpecious name.
Learn [illegible] from your neighbours. Peace with Rome
[illegible] quell'd the Latins, [illegible] their free born ſpirit,
And by her friendſhip [illegible] them with chains.

Tul. [illegible] on juſt conditions
I now [illegible]

The

The reſtitution of our conquer'd cities,
And fair alliance upon equal terms.
I know the Roman inſolence will ſcorn
To yield to this: and Titus muſt return
Within three days, the longeſt term allow'd him;
Of which the third is near elaps'd already.
Then even Galeſus will not dare to ſtop us
With ſuperſtitious forms and ſolemn trifles,
From letting looſe th' unbridled rage of war
Againſt thoſe hated tyrants of Heſperia.

Vol. Thanks to the Gods! my ſword will then be free.
Then, poor Corioli! thy bleeding wounds,
Thy treaſures ſack'd, thy captivated matrons,
Shall amply be reveng'd by thy Voluſius:
Then, Tullus, from the lofty brows of Marcius
Thou may'ſt regain the wreaths his conqu'ring hand,
By partial fortune aided, tore from thine.

Tul. O my Voluſius! thou, who art a ſoldier,
A try'd and brave one too, ſay, in thy heart
Doſt thou not ſcorn me? thou, who ſaw'ſt me bend
Beneath the half-ſpent thunder of a foe,
Warm from the conqueſt of Corioli,
Which, ruſhing furious in with thoſe, whoſe folly
He had repeli'd, he ſeiz'd almoſt alone
And gave to fire and ſword. Yet thence he flew
Scorning the plunder of our richeſt city,
His wounds undreſt, without [illegible] reſpite,
To where [illegible] edge
Of battle [illegible] the conſ[illegible]

To be oppos'd to me, with mighty rage,
Resistless, bore us down.
Vol. True valour, Tullus,
Lyes in the mind, the never-yielding purpose,
Nor owns the blind award of giddy fortune.
Tul. My soul, my friend, my soul is all on fire!
Thirst of revenge consumes me! the revenge
Of generous emulation, not of hatred.
This happy Roman, this proud Marcius, haunts me
Each troubled night, when slaves and captives sleep,
Forgetful of their chains, I, in my dreams,
Anew am vanquish'd; and, beneath the sword
With horror sinking, feel a tenfold death,
The death of honour. But I will redeem——
Yes, Marcius, I will yet redeem my fame.
To face thee once again is the great purpose
For which alone I live.—Till then how slow,
How tedious lags the time! while shame corrodes me,
With many a bitter thought; and injur'd honour
Sick, and desponding, preys upon itself.
Vol. It fast approaches now, the hour of vengeance,
To this fam'd land, to ancient Latium due.
Unbalanc'd Rome, at variance with herself,
To order lost, in deep and hot commotion,
Stands on the dangerous point of civil war;
Her haughty nobles and seditious commons
Reviling, fearing, hating one another;
While on our part all wears a prosperous face;
Our troops united, numerous, [illegible] spirit,
[illegible] if their [illegible] soul inform'd them all
O long expected day!

Tul. Go, brave Volusius,
Go breathe thy ardor into every breast;
That when the Volscian envoy shall return,
Whom ere the close of evening I expect,
One spirit may unite us in the cause
Of generous freedom, and our native rights,
So long oppress'd by Rome's encroaching power.

SCENE II.

TULLUS *alone.*

Galesus said that Marcius stands for consul.
O favour thou his suit, propitious Jove!
That I may brave him at his army's head;
In all the majesty of sovereign power!
That the whole conduct of the war may rest
On us alone, and prove by its decision,
Which of the two is worthiest to command.—

SCENE III.

TULLUS, OFFICER.

Tul. Ha! Why this haste? you look alarm'd
[illegible] lord.
One of exalted port, his vi[illegible] bid,
Has plac'd himself upon your sacred hearth,
Beneath the [illegible] protection of your Lares;
And [illegible] majestic there is [illegible]

Tul. Did you not aſk him who, and what he was?
Off. My lord, I could not ſpeak; I felt appall'd,
As if the preſence of ſome God had ſtruck me.
Tul. Come, daſtard! let me find this man of terrors.

SCENE IV.

The back ſcene opens and diſcovers CORIOLANUS *as deſcribed above.*

CORIOLANUS, TULLUS.

Tul. [*after ſome pauſe.*] Illuſtrious ſtranger— for thy high demeanor
Beſpeaks thee ſuch——who art thou?
Cor. [*Riſing, and unmuffling his face.*] View me, Tullus—— [*After ſome pauſe.*]
Doſt thou not know me?
Tul. No. That noble front
I never ſaw before. What is thy name?
Cor. Does not the ſecret voice of hoſtile inſtinct,
Does not thy ſwelling heart declare me to thee?
Tul. Gods! can it be!
Cor. Yes. I am Caius Marcius [illegible]
Known to thy ſmarting country by the [illegible]
Of Coriolanus. [illegible] is left [illegible]
That empty name, for all my [illegible]
The blood which I have ſhed for [illegible] Rome
Behold me [illegible] a victim yielded [illegible]

By

By her weak nobles to the madd'ning rabble.
I ſeek revenge. Thou may'ſt employ my ſword,
With keener edge, with heavier force againſt her,
Than e'er it fell upon the Volſcian nation.
But if thou, Tullus, doſt refuſe me this,
The only wiſh of my collected heart,
Where every paſſion in one burning point
Concentres, give me death: Death from thy hand
I ſure have well deſerv'd——Nor ſhall I bluſh
To take or life or death from Attius Tullus.

Tul. O Caius Marcius! in this one ſhort moment,
That we have friendly talk'd, my raviſh'd heart
Has undergone a great, a wond'rous change.
I ever held thee in my beſt eſteem;
But this heroic confidence has won me,
Stampt me at once thy friend. I were indeed
A wretch as mean as this thy truſt is noble,
Could I refuſe thee thy demand——Yes, Marcius!
Thou haſt thy wiſh! take half of my command.
[illegible] that be not enough, then take the whole.
[illegible] have my friend, a gallant force on foot,
[illegible], Marcius, fit to follow thee.
Go, [illegible] them on, and take thy full [illegible].
All ſhould unite to [illegible] the [illegible].
[illegible] is treaſon [illegible].
[illegible] generous [illegible],
[illegible],
[illegible]——
[illegible] to my [illegible]
[illegible]

Friend

Friend to the darling paſſion of my ſoul!
All elſe I ſet at nought!——Immortal Gods!
I am new made, and wonder at myſelf!
A little while ago, and I was nothing.
A powerleſs reptile crawling on the earth,
Curs'd with a ſoul that reſtleſs wiſh'd to wield
The bolts of Jove! I dwelt in Erebus,
I wander'd thro' the hopeleſs gloom of hell.
Stung with revenge, tormented by the furies!
Now, Tullus, like a god, you draw me thence,
Throne me amidſt the ſkies, with tempeſt charg'd,
And put the ready thunder in my hand!

Tul. What I have promis'd, Marcius, I will do.
Within an hour at fartheſt we expect
The freedman of Galeſus back from Rome,
Who carry'd to the ſenate our demands.
Their anſwer will, I doubt not, end the truce,
And inſtant draw our angry ſwords againſt them.
Till then retire within my inmoſt tent,
Unknown to all but me, that when our chiefs
Meet in full council to declare for war,
I may produce thee to their wondering eyes,
As if deſcended from avenging heaven
To humble [illegible] Rome, and teach her juſtice.

Cor. To thy [illegible], Tullus, I reſign
My future [illegible]
And, if I judge aright, [illegible]

End of the fourth Act.

ACT II. SCENE I.

GALESUS, TITUS.

Gal. INdeed! my Titus, I had hopes that Rome,
Vex'd as ſhe is with her domeſtic broils,
Her frontier weak, her armies unprepar'd,
Might have comply'd with our demands, and given us
The ſame alliance granted to the Latins.

Tit. The ſenate ſcarce would hear the terms I offer'd;
But order'd me to bring this anſwer back:
"If firſt the Volſci take up arms, the Romans
"Will be the laſt to lay them down."

Gal. Alas!
This anſwer ſeals the doom of many a wretch.
Unchain'd Bellona from her temple ruſhes,
With all the crimes and vices in her train.
Earth [illegible] her approach [illegible] rural peace,
Fair plenty, [illegible] the [illegible] joy of cities.
Soon will [illegible] rage, [illegible] devaſtation,
Each cruel [illegible] by names.
O [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]

With

With nature's bounty, that in fuller flow,
Still as your labours open more its sources,
Abundant gushes o'er the happy world;
When will you banish violence, and outrage,
To dwell with beasts of prey in woods and desarts?

Tit. Never till Rome shall change her conqu'ring maxims.

Gal. Her haughty spirit now will soar beyond
Its usual pitch, upborne by Caius Marcius.
Stands he not for the consulate?

Tit. He did.
But is no more a citizen of Rome.

Gal. What mean'st thou, Titus?

Tit. Marcius is from Rome
Banish'd for ever.

Gal. O immortal powers!
On what pretence could they to exile doom
Their wisest captain, and their bravest soldier?
Nor less renown'd for piety, for justice,
An uncorrupted heart, and purest manners.

Tit. The charge against him was entirely groundless,
What not his enemies themselves believ'd,
Affecting of tyrannic power in Rome.
His real crime was only some hot words,
Struck from his fiery temper in the [illegible],
Against those factious ministers of discord,
The tribunes of the people. [illegible] rage,
And frantic fury [illegible] the [illegible] plebeians,
By whom [illegible] in their bold attempt.

They durſt preſume to ſummon to the bar
Of an enrag'd and partial populace,
The moſt illuſtrious ſenator of Rome.
To this the nobles yielded—and, with his,
Gave up their own and children's rights for ever.

Gal. O ſhameful weakneſs in a Roman ſenate,
So much renown'd for firmneſs! Yet, my Titus,
Spite of my love to Marcius, I muſt own it,
The vigorous ſoil whence his heroic virtues
Luxuriant riſe, if not with careful hand
Severely weeded, teems with imperfections.
His lofty ſpirit brooks no oppoſition.
His rage, if once offended, knows no bounds.
He deems plebeians, with patrician blood
Compar'd, the creatures of a lower ſpecies,
Mere menial hands by nature made to ſerve him.

Tit. It was this high patrician pride undid him.
The furious people triumph'd in his ruin,
As if they had expell'd another Tarquin:
While, like a captive train, the vanquiſh'd nobles
Hung their dejected heads in ſilent ſhame.
Marcius alone ſeem'd unconcern'd; tho' deep
The latent tempeſt boil'd within his breaſt,
Choak'd up and ſmother'd with exceſſive rage.

Gal. You were his gueſt at Rome, and therefore,
Titus,
Might on this ſad condition be permitted
To join your [illegible] with his [illegible] friends,
Saw you that [illegible] ſcene?

Tit. I did, Galeſus.
I follow'd Marcius home——His mother, there,
Veturia, the moſt venerable matron
Theſe eyes have e'er beheld, the ſoft Volumnia,
His lovely virtuous wife, amidſt his children,
Spread on the ground, lay loſt in dumb deſpair,
He ſwelling ſtood a-while, and could not ſpeak,
Th' affronted hero ſtruggling with the man;
Then thus at laſt he broke the gloomy ſilence;
" 'Tis done. The guilty ſentence is pronounc'd,
" Ungrateful Rome has caſt me from her boſom.
" Support this blow with fortitude and courage,
" As it becomes two generous Roman matrons.
" I recommend my children to your care.
" Farewel. I go, I quit, without regret,
" A city grown an enemy to virtue."
Gal. Oh godlike Marcius! Oh unconquer'd ſtrength
And dignity of mind! How much ſuperior
Is ſuch a ſoul to all the power of fortune!
Tit. This ſaid, he ſternly try'd to break away:
When, holding in his hand his eldeſt ſon,
Veturia follow'd, whilſt the poor Volumnia,
All drown'd in tears, and bearing in one arm
Their youngeſt, yet an infant, with the other
Hung clinging at his knees--He, turning to them,
Half ſoften'd, half ſevere, breath'd from his ſoul
Theſe broken accents—" Ceaſe your vain complaints.
" Mother, you have no more [illegible] and thou.
" Thou [illegible] of women! [illegible] dear Volumnia!
" No more [illegible]"—[illegible] dire words

Volumnia lifeleſs ſunk: and off he flung,
With wild precipitation.

Gal. Thy ſad tale
Blinds my old eyes with tears—But whither, tell me,
O whither, Titus, bent he then his courſe?

Tit. Where the blind genius of regardleſs rage
And deſperation led. On to the gate,
Capena call'd, attended by the nobles,
He ſtalk'd in ſullen majeſty along;
Nor deign'd a word. A godlike virtuous anger
Beam'd thro' his features, and ſublim'd his air.
With down caſt eyes he walk'd; or, if aſide
He chanc'd to look, each look was great reproach.
Thus in emphatic ſilence, that made words
Void and inſipid all, he parted from them,
The day preceding my return from Rome;
Nor has been heard of ſince, loſt in th' abyſs
Of his own woes.

Gal. O Marcius, noble Marcius!
How ſhall my friendſhip ſuccour thy diſtreſs?
Where ſhall I find thee, to partake thy ſorrows,
And make myſelf companion of thy exile?
But, Titus, we indulge diſcourſe too long—
Go, and aſſemble thou the Volſcian chiefs,
Whilſt I repair to Tullus, to inform,
And bring him to the council, there to hear
The fatal [illegible] brought from Rome.

SCENE II.

Changes to TULLUS's *tent.*

CORIOLANUS, TULLUS.

Cor. Forgive me, Tullus, if I count the moments
That ſtop the purpoſe of thy noble kindneſs,
And keep me here confin'd in tame inaction.
Why lingers Titus?

Tul. Calm thy reſtleſs heart,
Brave Marcius; every minute I expect him.
Soon from the cloud that hides thee, ſhalt thou break
With double brightneſs; ſoon thy fiery rage
Shall wither all the ſtrength and pride of Rome.

Cor. O righteous Jove, Protector of the injur'd!
If from my earlieſt youth, with pious awe,
I ſtill have reverenc'd thy all powerful juſtice,
Still by her ſacred dictates rul'd my actions;
O let thy juſtice now ſupport my cauſe,
And arm my ſtrong right hand with all her terrors!
When that is done, life or death be my lot,
As thy almighty pleaſure ſhall determine.

[*Enter an officer to* Tullus.]

Off. My lord, Galeſus aſks admittance to you.

Tul. Marcius, retire ir inſtant, till I hear
The bu[illegible] brings him either——Will him enter.

[*Exit Officer and* Coriolanus.]

[*Enter Galeſus.*]

SCENE

SCENE III.

TULLUS, GALESUS.

Gal. Tullus, the Roman ſenate has return'd
No other anſwer to our late demands,
But abſolute denial and defiance.
Tul. It is what I expected—We ſhall teach them
An humbler language ſoon—Haſt thou aſſembled,
As I deſir'd the Volſcian chiefs in council?
Gal. Titus is gone to ſummon their attendance.
Tul. It is enough—Come forth, my noble gueſt!
And ſhew Galeſus how the Gods aſſiſt us.

SCENE IV.

CORIOLANUS, TULLUS, GALESUS.

Gal. O my aſtoniſh'd ſoul: what do I ſee?
What! Caius Marcius! Caius Marcius here,
Beneath one tent with Tullus?
Tul. Ay, and more.
With Tullus, now his friend and fellow ſoldier.
Yes, thou ſhalt ſee him thund'ring at the head
Of Volſcian armies; he [illegible]
Deſtruction thro' their ranks—[illegible]
While to our chiefs, and fathers, I [illegible]
Their unexpected gueſt.

S 5 E

SCENE V.

CORIOLANUS, GALESUS.

Cor. Thou good old man!
Close let me ſtrain thee to my faithful heart,
Which now is doubly thine, united more
By the protection which thy country gives me,
Than by our former friendſhip.
Gal. Strange event!
This is thy work Almighty Providence!
Whoſe power beyond the ſtretch of human thought,
Revolves the orbs of empire; bids them ſink
Deep in the dead'ning night of thy diſpleaſure,
Or riſe majeſtic o'er a wond'ring world.
The Gods by thee——I ſee it, Coriolanus——
Mean to exalt us, and depreſs the Romans.
Cor. Galeſus, yes, the Gods have ſent me hither;
Thoſe righteous Gods, who, when vindictive juſtice
Excites them to deſtroy a worthleſs people,
Make their own crimes and follies ſtrike the blow.
Gal. Cheriſh theſe thoughts, that teach us what we are,
And tame the pride of man. There is a power,
Unſeen, that rules th' illimitable world,
That guides its motions, from the brighteſt ſtar
To the leaſt duſt of this ſin-tainted mold;
While man, who madly deems himſelf the lord
of nature, is nought but weakneſs and dependence.

This

This facred truth, by fure experience taught,
Thou muft have learnt, when, wand'ring all alone,
Each bird, each infect, flitting thro' the fky,
Was more fufficient for itfelf, than thou———
Ah the full image of thy woes diffolves me!
The pangs that muft have torn, at parting from thee,
Thy mother and thy wife. I cannot think
Of that fad fcene without fome drops of pity!

Cor. Who was it forc'd me to that bitter parting?
Who, in one cruel, hafty moment, chas'd me
From wife, from children, friends, and houfhold gods,
Me! who fo often had protected theirs?
Who, from the facred city of my fathers,
Drove me with Nature's commoners to dwell,
To lodge beneath their wide unfhelter'd roof,
And at their table feed? O blaft me, Gods!
With every woe! debility of mind,
Difhonour, juft contempt, and palfy'd weaknefs,
If I forgive the villains! Yes, Galefus,
Yes, I will offer to the powers of vengeance
A great, a glorious victim—a whole city!—
Why, Tullus, this delay?

Gal. May Coriolanus
Be to the Volfcian nation, and himfelf,
The dread, the godlike inftrument of juftice!
But let not rage and vengeance mix their rancour;
Let them not trouble with their fretful [illegible]
Their angry gleams, that azure, where enthron'd
The calm divinity of juftice fits,
And pities, while fhe punifhes, mankind.

Cor. What ſaidſt thou? What, againſt the powers of vengeance?
The Gods gave honeſt anger, juſt revenge,
To be the awful guardians of the rights
And native dignity of human kind.
O were it not for them, the ſaucy world
Would grow a noiſome neſt of little tyrants!
Each carrion-crow, on eagle-merit perch'd,
Would peck his eyes out, and the mungril-cur
At pleaſure bait the lion——No, Galeſus,
I would not raſhly, nor on light occaſion,
Receive the deep impreſſion in my breaſt;
But when the baſe, the brutal and unjuſt,
Or, worſe than all, th' ungratful, ſtamp it there;
O I will then with luxury ſupreme
Enjoy the pleaſure of offended Gods,
A righteous, juſt revenge!——Behold my ſoul.

[*Enter an officer.*]

Off. My lords, th' aſſembled chiefs deſire your preſence.

Gal. Come, noble Marcius; let my joyful lord
Conduct thee thither—Doubt not thy reception
Will be proportion'd to thy fame and merit.

SCENE

SCENE VI.

The back-ſcene opens, and diſcovers the deputies of the Volſcian ſtates, aſſembled in council. They riſe and ſalute Coriolanus; then reſume their places.

GALESUS, TULLUS, CORIOLANUS, SENATORS.

Gal. Aſſembled ſtates, and captains of the Volſci,
Behold the chief ſo much renown'd in war;
Our once ſo formidable foe, but now
Our proffer'd friend and ſoldier—Caius Marcius.

1ſt *Sen.* We give him hearty welcome from our ſouls.

Cor. Moſt noble chiefs, and fathers of the Volſci,
I need not ſay, how by the people's rage,
And the poor weakneſs of the timid nobles,
I was expell'd from Rome. Had I confin'd
My wiſhes merely to a ſafe retreat,
Some Latin city might have given me that;
Or any nameleſs corner. What import
Where a tame patient exile rots in [illegible]
But, Volſcian lords, permit me to [illegible]
I would at once cut ſhort my uſeleſs days,
Rather than be that deſpicable wretch,
Who neither can take vengeance on his
Nor ſerve his friends. [illegible] my tempeſt, chiefs,
I ſhall be glad to [illegible] my ſword,
In' aſylum, which I [illegible] among the Volſci

[illegible]ome

Rome is our common foe: then let us join
Our common ſufferings, paſſions, and reſentments.
Yes, tho' but one, I bring ſo many wrongs,
So large a ſhare of powerful enmity,
Into the war, as gives me the preſumption
To offer to the Volſcian ſtates th' alliance
Even of my ſingle arm.——

Tul. That ſingle arm
Is in itſelf a numerous army, Marcius;
The Volſcians ſo eſteem it——But proceed.

Cor. I will not mention, Volſcian chiefs, what talent
The world allows me to poſſeſs in war:
But be that what it will, you may employ it.
Soldier, or captain, in whatever ſtation
You place me, I will loſe each drop of blood,
Or with this hand I'll fix the Volſcian ſtandard
On the proud towers of Capitolian Jove.

Tul. Chiefs of the Volſcian league, I give you joy
Of our new citizen, the noble Marcius.
The genius of the Volſcian ſtate has ſent him,
Whetted by wrongs into a keener hatred
Than that we bear to Rome. It were contemning
With imprudent ſelf-ſufficient arrogance,
This bounty of the Gods, not to accept
With every mark of honour, of his ſervice.
I, Volſcians, I, even Attius Tullus, give,
Firſt of you all, my ſuffrage, that Caius Marcius
Be now received to high command among us;
That inſtantly we do appoint him general
Of

Of half our troops, which here, with your conſent,
I to him yield.—Speak, chiefs, is this your pleaſure?

1ſt *Sen.* It is—We give unanimous conſent.

Tul. [*Embracing him.*] Marcius, I joy to call thee my companion,
And colleague in this war.

Cor. By all the Gods!
Thou art the generous victor of my ſoul!
Yes, Tullus, I am conquer'd by thy virtue.

Gal. Tho' I have oft, on great occaſions, Tullus,
Beheld thee in the ſenate, and the field,
Cover'd with glory; yet, I muſt avow,
I never ſaw thee ſhew ſuch genuine greatneſs,
Such true ſublimity of ſoul, as now.
To ſcorn th' all-powerful charm of ſelfiſh paſſions,
Chiefly the dazzling pride of emulation,
That noble weakneſs of heroic minds,
To ſink thyſelf that thou may'ſt raiſe thy country;
To put the ſword into thy rival's hand,
And twine thy promis'd laurels round his brow——
O 'tis a flight beyond the higheſt point
Of martial glory! and what few can reach.
Go forth, ye choſen miniſters of juſtice;
And may that awful power, whoſe ſecret hand
Sways all our paſſions, turns our partial views
All to its own dread purpoſes, attend you!

Cor. I burn to enter on the glorious taſk.
You now have mark'd me out. How ſlow the time
To the warm ſoul, that in the very inſtant
It forms, would execute the great deſign.

'Tis

'Tis my advice we march direct to Rome;
We cannot be too quick. Let the first dawn
See us in bright array before her walls.
Perhaps when they behold their exile there,
Back'd by your force, some conscious hearts among them
May feel th' alarm of guilt.

Tul. I much approve
Of this advice. 'Tis what I thought before,
Ere strengthen'd, Marcius, by thy mighty arm:
But now 'tis doubly right. Here, Volscian chiefs,
Here let our counsel terminate—The troops
Have had repose sufficient. Strait to Rome,
Come, let us urge our march—As yet the stars
Ride in their middle watch: We shall, with ease,
Reach it by dawn.———

Cor. Yes, we have time—too much!
Six tedious hours till morn——But hence! away!
My soul on fire anticipates the dawn.

The End of the Second Act.

ACT III. SCENE I.

CORIOLANUS, TULLUS, VOLUSIUS, TITUS, *with a croud of* Volſcian *officers. Acclamations behind the ſcenes.*

Cor. NO more—I merit not this laviſh praiſe.
True, we have driven the Roman legigions back,
Defeated and diſgrac'd——But what is this?
Nothing, ye Volſci, nothing yet is done.
We but begin the wondrous leaf of ſtory,
That marks the Roman doom. At length it dawns,
The deſtin'd hour, that eaſes of their fears
The nations round, and ſets Heſperia free.
Come on, my brave companions of the war!
Come, let us finiſh at one mighty ſtroke
This toil of labouring fate——We will, or periſh!
While, noble Tullus, you protect the camp,
I, with my troops, all men of choſen valour,
And well—prov'd to day, will ſtorm the city.
Tit. Beneath thy animating conduct, Marcius,
What can the Volſcian [illegible] not perform?
Thy very ſight a[illegible] [illegible]ues the Romans.
When,

When, lifting up your helm, you ſhew'd your face,
That like a comet glar'd deſtruction on them,
I ſaw their braveſt veterans fly before thee.
Their ancient ſpirit has with thee forſook them,
And ruin hangs o'er yon devoted walls
[*Enter an Officer, who addreſſes himſelf to* Coriolanus.]
Off. My lord, a herald is arriv'd from Rome,
To ſay, a deputation from the ſenate,
Attended by the miniſters of Heaven,
A venerable train of prieſts and flamens,
Is on the way, addreſs'd to you.
Cor. To me!
What can this meſſage mean!—Stand to your arms,
Ye Volſcian troops; and let theſe Romans paſs
Betwixt the lowring frown of double files.
What! do they think me ſuch a milky boy,
To pay my vengeance with a few ſoft words.
Come, fellow-ſoldiers, Tullus, come, and ſee,
If I betray the honours you have done me.
[*Goes out with a train of* Volſcian *officers.*]

SCENE II.

TULLUS, VOLUSIUS, *who remain.*

Vol. [*After ſome ſilence.*] Are we not, Tullus, fail-
ing in our duty
Not to attend our gener[illegible]?
Tul. How! what is't thou?
Vol. Methought, my lord, [illegible] orders were,
We

We ſhould attend the triumph now preparing
O'er all his foes at once—Romans and Volſci!
Come, we ſhall give offence.

Tul. Of this no more.
I pray thee ſpare thy bitter irony.

Vol Shall I then ſpeak without diſguiſe?

Tul. Speak out,
With all the honeſt bluntneſs of a friend.
Think'ſt thou I fear the truth?

Vol. Then, Tullus, know,
Thou art no more the general of the Volſci.
Thou haſt, by this thy generous weakneſs, ſunk
Thyſelf into a private man of Antium.
Yes, thou haſt taken from thy laurel'd brow
The well-earn'd trophies of thy toils and perils,
Thy ſpringing hopes, the faireſt ever budded.
And heap'd them on a man too proud before.

Tul. He bears it high.

Vol. Death and perdition! high!
With uncontrol'd command!—— You ſee, already,
He will not be encumber'd with the fetters
Of our advice. He ſpeaks his ſovereign will;
On every hand he iſſues out his orders,
As to his natural ſlaves.——For you, my lord,
He has, I think, confin'd you to your camp,
There in inglorious indolence to languiſh;
While he, beneath your blaſted eyes, ſhall reap
The harvest of your honour.

Tul. No, Volſci,
Whatever honour [illegible] him be gain'd

Reverts

Reverts to me, from whose superior bounty
He drew the means of all his glorious deeds.
This mighty chief, this conqueror of Rome,
Is but my creature.———

Vol. Wretched self-delusion;
He and the Volscians know he is thy master.
He acts as such in all things—Now, by Mars,
Could my abhorrent soul endure the thought
Of stooping to a Roman chief, I here
Would leave thee in thy solitary camp,
And go where glory calls.

Tul. Indeed, Volusius,
I did expect more equal treatment from him.
But what of that?—The generous pride of virtue
Disdains to weigh too nicely the returns
Her bounty meets with——Like the liberal Gods,
From her own gracious nature she bestows,
Nor stoops to ask reward——Yet must I own,
I thought he would not have so soon forgot
What he so lately was, and what I am.

Vol. Gods! knew ye not his character before?
Did you not know his genius was to yours
Averse, as are antipathies in nature?
High, over-weening, tyrannously proud,
And only fit to hold command o'er slaves?
Hence, as repugnant to that equal life,
Which is the quickening soul of all republics,
The Roman people cast him forth: and we,
Shall we receive the [illegible] their repose,
Into our breast? Are we less free than they?

Or

Or ſhall we be more patient of a tyrant?

Tul. All this I knew. But while his imperfections
Are thy glad theme, thou haſt forgot his virtues.

Vol. I leave that ſubject to the ſmooth Galeſus,
And theſe his Volſcian flatterers—His virtues!
Truſt me there is no inſolence that treads
So high as that which rears itſelf on virtue.

Tul. Well, be it ſo—I meant, that even his vices
Should, on this great occaſion, ſerve the Volſci.

Vol. Confuſion! there it is! there lurks the ſting
Of our diſhonour! while this Marcius leads
The Roman armies, ours are driven before him.
Behold, he changes ſides; when with him changes
The fortune of the war. Strait they grow Volſci,
And we victorious Romans—Such, no doubt,
Such is his ſecret boaſt—Ay, this vile brand
Succeſs itſelf will fix for ever on us;
And, Tullus, thou, 'tis thou muſt anſwer for it.

Tul. [*Aſide.*] His words are daggers to my heart; I feel
Their truth, but am aſham'd to own my folly.

Vol. O ſhame! O infamy! the thought conſumes me,
It ſcalds my eyes with tears, to ſee a Roman
Born on our ſhoulders to immortal fame;
Juſt in the happy moment that decided
The long diſpute of ages, that for which
Our generous anceſtors had toil'd and bled,
To ſee him then ſtep in and ſteal our glory!
O that we firſt had periſh'd all! A people,

Who

Who cannot find in their own proper force
Their own protection, are not worth the saving!
Tul. It must have way! I will no more suppress it—
Know then, my rough old friend, no less than thee
His conduct hurts me and upbraids my folly.
I wake as from a dream. What demon mov'd me?
What doating generosity? his woes,
Was it his woes! to see the brave reduc'd
To trust his mortal foe? perhaps, a little
That work'd within my bosom—But, Volusius,
That was not all———I will to thee confess
The weakness of my heart—Yes, it was pride,
The dazzling pride to see my rival-warrior,
The great Coriolanus, bend his soul,
His haughty soul, to sue for my protection.
Protection said I? were it that alone,
I had been base to have refus'd him that,
To have refus'd him aught a gallant foe
Owes to a gallant foe.—But to exalt him
To the same level, nay above myself;
To yield him the command of half my troops,
The choicest acting half—That, that was madness!
Was weak, was mean, unworthy of a man!——
Vol. I scorn to flatter thee—It was indeed.
Tul. Curse on the slave Galesus! soothing, he,
Seiz'd the soud moment of infatuation,
And clinch'd the [illegible] my generous folly forg'd.
How shall I [illegible] labyrinth [illegible]?
Must it then be? what cruel [illegible] dooms me,
In war or peace, to creep beneath his fortune!

Vol.

Vol. That genius is thyſelf. If thou canſt bear
The very thought of ſtooping to this Roman,
Thou from that moment art his vaſſal, Tullus;
By that thou doſt acknowledge, parent Nature
Has form'd him thy ſuperior. But if fix'd
Upon the baſe of manly reſolution,
Thou ſay'ſt—I will be free! I will command!
I and my country! then—O never doubt it——
We ſhall find means to cruſh this vain intruder;
Even I myſelf——this hand——
Nay, hear me, Tullus,
'Tis not yet come to that, that laſt reſource.
I do not ſay we ſhould employ the dagger,
While other, better means are in our power.

Tul. No, my Voluſius, fortune will not drive us,
Or I am much deceiv'd, to that extreme:
We ſhall not want the ſtrongeſt, faireſt plea,
To give a ſolemn ſanction to his fate.
He will betray himſelf. Whate'er his rage
[illegible] talks, a weakneſs for his country
[illegible] his ſoul, and he is ſtill a Roman—
[illegible] we ſee him tempted to the brink
Of [illegible]—Then down [illegible],
[illegible] hurl him to perdition!
[illegible] hark! the [illegible] us to a ſcene
I ſhould [illegible] from hope we thence
May gather [illegible] our purpoſe.

[illegible] SCENE

SCENE III.

The back-ſcene opens, and diſcovers Coriolanus *ſitting on his tribunal, attended by his lictors, and a croud of* Volſcian *officers. Files of troops drawn up on either hand. In the depth of the ſcene appear the deputies from the* Roman *ſenate,* M. Minucius, Poſthumus Cominius, Sp. Lartius, P. Pinnarius, *and* Q. Sulpitius, *all conſular ſenators, who had been his moſt zealous friends. And behind them march the prieſts, the ſacrificers, the augurs, and the guardians of the ſacred things, dreſt in their ceremonial habits. Theſe advance ſlowly, betwixt the files of ſoldiers, under arms. As* Tullus *enters,* Coriolanus *riſing ſalutes him.*

CORIOLANUS.

Here, noble Tullus, ſit, and judge my conduct;
Nor ſpare to check me, if I act amiſs.

Tul. Marcius, the Volſcian fate is in thy hand.
Coriolanus is ſeated again, and Tullus *places himſelf upon a tribunal on his left hand. Mean time the* Roman *deputies advance up to* Coriolanus, *and ſalute him, which he returns.*
Cor. What! Romans, from the very blaſt of the Volſci,
Is your demand?
Min. O Coriolanus, Rome,
Nurſe of the tender years, thy parent city,

Her ſenators, her people, prieſts, and augurs,
Her every order and degree, by us,
Thy ever-zealous, ſtill unſhaken friends,
Sue in the moſt pathetic terms for peace.
And if in this conſtrain'd, we from our maxim,
Never to aſk but give it, muſt depart;
It is ſome conſolation, in the ſtate
To which thou haſt by thy ſuperior valour
Reduc'd us, that we aſk it from a Roman.

Cor. I was a Roman once, and thought the name
Was not diſhonour'd by me; but it pleas'd
Your lords, the mob of Rome, to take it from me;
Nor will I now receive it back again.

Min. The name thou may'ſt reject, but canſt not throw
The duties from thee which that name imports;
Indiſſoluble duties bound upon thee
By the ſtrong hand of nature, and confirm'd
By the dread ſanction of all-ruling Jove.
Then hear thy country's ſupplicating voice;
By all thoſe duties I conjure thee hear us.

Cor. Well—I will hear thee: ſpeak, declare thy meſſage.

Min. Give peace, give healing peace, to two brave nations,
Fatigu'd with [illegible] of cruel deeds!
To carry on deſtruction's eaſy trade,
Afflict mankind, and ſcourge the world with war,
Is what each wicked, each ambitious man
Who lets his furious paſſions looſe, may do!

But

But in the flattering torrent of ſucceſs,
To check his rage, and drop th' avenging ſword,
When a repenting people aſk it of him,
That is the genuine bounty of a God.
Then urge no farther this your juſt reſentment:
Which, injur'd as you are, you needs muſt feel,
But never ought to carry into action
Againſt your ſacred country; whence you drew
Your life, your virtues, every moral good,
That very valour you employ againſt her.
Stop, Coriolanus, ere, beyond retreat,
You plunge yourſelf in crimes. To the fierce joy
Of vengeance puſh'd, to barbarous exceſs,
Repentance will ſucceed, and ſick'ning horror.
Conſider too, the ſlippery ſtate of fortune.
The gods take pleaſure oft, when haughty mortals
On their own pride erect a mighty fabric,
By ſlighteſt means, to lay their tow'ring ſchemes
Low in the duſt, and teach them they are nothing.
Return, thou virtuous Roman! to the boſom
Of thy imploring country. Lo! her arms
She fondly ſpreads to take thee back again,
And by redoubled love efface her harſhneſs.
Return, and crown thee with the nobleſt wreathe
Which glory can beſtow—the palm of mercy!

Cor. Marcus Minucius, and ye other Romans,
Reſpected ſenators, and holy flamens,
Attend, and [illegible] to your demand this anſwer:
Why court ye me, the ſervant of the Veſſei?
It is to them that you muſt bend for peace,

Which on theſe only terms they will accord you.
" Reſtore the conquer'd lands, your former wars
" Have raviſh'd from them: from their towns and
" cities,
" Won by your arms, withdraw your colonies;
" And to the full immunities of Rome
" Frankly admit them, as you have the Latins."
Then, Romans, you have peace, and not till then!
If theſe are terms which ſuit not your ambition,
They ſuit the ſtate to which the Volſcian arms
Have now reduc'd you—We have learn'd from Rome
To uſe our fortune, and command the vanquiſh'd.

Tul. [*aſide.*] Death to my hopes! I'm now his ſlave for ever.

Cor. [*Addreſſing himſelf to the Volſci.*] This, my illuſtrious patrons and protectors,
Volſci, to you I owed. Permit me now
To do myſelf and injur'd honour juſtice.
[*Turning again to the Romans.*]
As to the liberty you idly vaunt
To give me of returning to your city,
'Tis what I hold unworthy of acceptance.
Can I return into th' ungrateful boſom
Of a diſtracted ſtate, where, to the rage
Of a vile fickleſs populace, the laws
Are by your fluctuant weakneſs given a prey?
Who are the men that hold the ſway among you?
And whom have you expell'd, as unworthy
To live within the circuit of your walls?
O the wild thought breaks in, and troubles me!—
With

With what, ye Romans, can the ſowereſt cenſor,
The moſt envenom'd malice juſtly charge me?
Did I e'er break your laws? Nay, did I e'er
Do aught that could diſturb the ſacred order,
The peace and ſocial harmony of life;
Or taint your ancient ſanctity of manners?
What was my crime? I could not bear to ſee
Your dignity debas'd, to ſee the rabble
Tread on the reverend grey authority
Of ſenatorial wiſdom: yes, for you,
In your defence I did enrage this monſter;
And yet you baſely left me to its fury.
Then talk no more of ſervices and friendſhip:
A friend, who can, and does not ſhield, betrays me.
Or if the power was wanting, then your ſenate
Is ſunk into ſervility and bondage,
Nor ſhould a freeman deign to ſit among you.

Min. The wiſeſt are ſometimes compell'd to yield
To popular ſtorms: yet I defend not, Marcius,
Our timid conduct; we have felt our error,
And now invite thee back to aid the ſenate,
With thy heroic ſpirit, to reſtrain
The giddy rage of faction, and to hold
The reins of government more firm hereafter.
As to th' appeal which thou haſt nobly made,
In vindication of thy ſpotleſs fame,
With pleaſure we confirm it, and bear witneſs
To all thy public and thy private virtues;
But let us alſo beg thee not to ſtain
The brightneſs of that glory by a crime,

Which, unrepented, would disgrace them all,
A dire rebellious war against thy country.

Cor. Absurd! What can you mean? To call a people,
Who with the last indignity have us'd me.
To call my foes my country! No, Minucius,
It is the generous nation of the Volsci,
These brave, these virtuous men, you see around me,
Who, when I wander'd a poor helpless exile,
Took pity of my injuries and woes;
Forgot the former mischiefs of my sword;
Heap'd on me kindness, honours, dignities;
Fear'd not to trust me with this high command,
And plac'd me here the guardian of their cause:—
Be witness, Jove!—It is alone their nation
I henceforth will acknowledge for my country!
Let this suffice—you have my answer, Romans.

Com. This answer, Coriolanus, is the dictate
More of thy pride than magnanimity:
'Tis thy revenge that gives it, not thy virtue.
Art thou above the gods? who joy to shew'r
Their doubled goodness on repenting mortals?
But think not I intend, by this, to urge
Our proffer'd peace, so harshly treated, further.
That were a weakness ill becoming Romans.
Yet I must tell thee, it would better suit
A fierce despotic chief of barbarous slaves,
Than the calm dignity of one who sits
In the grave senate of a free republic,
To talk [illegible]

Plebeians

Plebeians from the native rights of man.

Cor. Ha! doſt thou come the people's advocate
To me, Cominius! Com'ſt thou to inſult me?

Com. Nay, hear me, Marcius:—Theſe grey hairs impower me
To ſet thee right before this great aſſembly:
And there was once a time, thou wouldſt have heard
Thy general with more deference and patience.——
I tell thee then, whoe'er amidſt the ſons
Of reaſon, valour, liberty, and virtue,
Diſplays diſtinguiſh'd merit, is a noble
Of nature's own creating. Such have riſen,
Sprung from the duſt; or where had been our honours?
And ſuch in radiant bands will riſe again,
In yon immortal city, that, when moſt
Depreſt by fate, and near apparent ruin,
Returns, as with an energy divine,
On her aſtoniſh'd foes, and ſhakes them from her.—
Your pardon, Volſci—But this, Coriolanus,
Is what I had to ſay.

Cor. And I have heard it——

[*Riſing from his tribunal; and the prieſts advancing to addreſs him, he prevents them.*]

For you, ye awful miniſters of heaven,
Let me not hear your holy lips profan'd
By urging what my duty muſt refuſe.
I bow in adoration to the gods:
I venerate the[illegible] ſervants. [illegible] there is,

There is a power, their chief, their darling care,
The guardian of mankind, which to betray
Were violating all—And that is juſtice.
So far my public character demands;
So far my honour——Now, what ſhould forbid
The man, and friend, to be indulg'd a little?
Permit me to embrace thee, good Minucius,
Thee Lartius; you, Pinnarius and Sulpitius:
But chiefly thee, Cominius, who firſt rais'd me
To deeds of arms; who from thy conſular brow
Took thy own crown, and with it circled mine.
Tho' nought can ſhake my purpoſe, yet I wiſh
That Rome had ſent me others on this errand.
I thank you for your friendſhip. The protection
Which you have given to thoſe, whom once I call'd
By tender names, I would not now remember.
How ſhall I—ſay—return your generous goodneſs?
O there is nothing you, as friends, can aſk,
My grateful heart will not with pleaſure grant you.
Com. We thank thee, Coriolanus—But a Roman
Diſdains that favour you refuſe his country.
Cor. [*To the Volſcian officers.*] See that they be,
with due regard and ſafety,
Conducted back.
[*To the Roman ſenators.*] I will ſuſpend the aſſault,
Till to theſe terms, of which we will not bate
The ſmalleſt part, your ſenate may have time
To ſend their laſteſt anſwer. Then we cut
All further treaty off. Romans, farewell.

End of the Third Act.

ACT

ACT IV. SCENE I.

TULLUS *alone.*

WHAT is the mind of man? A reſtleſs ſcene
Of vanity and weakneſs; ſhifting ſtill
As ſhift the lights of our uncertain knowledge;
Or as the various gale of paſſion breathes.
None ever thought himſelf more deeply founded
On what is right, nor felt a nobler ardor,
Than I, when I inveſted Caius Marcius
With this ill-judg'd command. Now it appears
Diſtraction, folly, monſtrous folly! meanneſs!
And down I plunge, betray'd even by my virtue,
From gulph to gulph, from ſhame to deeper ſhame.

SCENE II.

TULLUS, GALESUS.

Gal. I liſten'd, Tullus, to the important ſcene
That lately paſs'd before us, with moſt ſtrict,
Unprejudic'd attention; and have ſince
Revolv'd it in my mind, both as a man,
Ally'd to all mankind, and as a Volſcian.
Indeed our terms are high, and by the manner

In

In which they were preſcrib'd by Coriolanus,
Are what we cannot hope will e'er be granted.
They ſhould be ſoften'd. Let us yield a little.
Conſcious ourſelves to a great nation's pride,
The pride of human nature. Could the Romans
Stoop to ſuch peace, commanded by the ſword,
They then were ſlaves, unworthy our alliance.

Tul. Gods! do I hear in thee, one of the chiefs
Intruſted with the honour of the Volſci,
An advocate for Rome?

Gal. I glory, Tullus,
To own myſelf an advocate for peace.
Peace is the happy, natural ſtate of man;
War his corruption, his diſgrace——

Tul. His ſafeguard!
His pride! his glory—What but war, juſt war,
Gave Greece her heroes? Thoſe who drew the ſword
(As we do now) againſt the ſons of rapine;
To quell proud tyrants, and to free mankind.

Gal. Yes, Tullus, when to juſt defence the warrior
Confines his force, he is a worſhip'd name,
Dear to mankind, the firſt and beſt of mortals!
Yet ſtill, if this can by ſoft means be done,
And fair accommodation, that is better.
Why ſhould we purchaſe with the blood of thouſands,
What may be gain'd by mutual juſt conceſſion?
Why give up peace, the beſt of human blеſſings,
For the vain cruel pride of uſeleſs conqueſt?

Tul. Theſe ſoothing dreams of philoſophic ſages
Are only fit for unfrequented ſhades.

The

The ſage ſhould quit the buſy buſtling world
Ill ſuited to his gentle meditations,
And in ſome deſart find that peace he loves.
Gal. Miſtaken man! Philoſophy conſiſts not
In airy ſchemes, or idle ſpeculations:
The rule and conduct of all ſocial life
Is her great province. Not in lonely cells
Obſcure ſhe lurks, but holds her heavenly light
To ſenates and to kings, to guide their councils,
And teach them to reform and bleſs mankind.
All policy but her's is falſe, and rotten;
All valour not conducted by her precepts,
Is a deſtroying fury ſent from hell
To plague unhappy man, and ruin nations.
Tul. To ſtop the waſte of that deſtroying fury,
Is the great cauſe and purpoſe of this war.
Art thou a friend to peace?—ſubdue the Romans.
Who, who, but they, have turn'd this ancient land,
Where, from Saturnian times, harmonious concord
Still lov'd to dwell, into a ſcene of blood,
Of endleſs diſcord and perpetual rapine?
The ſword, the vengeful ſword, muſt drain away
This boiling blood, that thus diſturbs the nations!
Talk not of terms. It is a vain attempt
To bind th' ambitious and unjuſt by treaties:
Theſe they elude a thouſand ſpecious ways;
Or if they cannot find a fair pretext,
They bluſh not in the face of heaven to break them.
Gal. Why then the diſputed heaven will combat for us.

Set

Set juſtice on our ſide, and then my voice
Shall be as loud for war as thine; my ſword
Shall ſtrike as deep; at leaſt my blood ſhall flow
As freely, Tullus, in my country's cauſe.
But as I then would die to ſerve the Volſcians,
So now I dare to ſerve them by oppoſing,
Even with my ſingle voice, th' impetuous torrent
That hurries us away beyond the bounds
Of temperate wiſdom; and preſume to tell thee,
It is thy paſſion, not thy prudence dictates
This haughty language.

Tul. Yes it is my paſſion,
A paſſion for the glory of my country,
That ſcorns your narrow views of timid prudence.
Our injur'd honour drew our ſwords, and never
Shall they be ſheath'd while I command the Volſcians,
Till Rome ſubmits to Antium.——

Gal. Rome will periſh
Ere ſhe ſubmit; and ſhe has ſtill her walls,
The ſtrength of her allies, her native valour,
Which oft has ſav'd her in the worſt extremes,
And, ſtronger yet than all, deſpair to aid her.

Tul. All theſe will nought avail her, if our fears
Come not to her aſſiſtance——But, Galeſus,
Why urge you this to me? Go, talk to Marcius.
The war has given him all his pride could hope for,
To ſee Rome's ſenate humbled at his feet:
He now may wiſh to reign in peace at Antium.
And thou, perhaps, art come an envoy from him,
To learn if I ſhall prove a quiet ſubject.

Gal.

Cal. Thro' this unguarded opening of thy ſoul,
I ſee what ſtings thee—Ah! beware of envy!
If that pale fury ſeize thee, thou art loſt!
Tullus, 'tis eaſier far, from the clear breaſt,
To keep out treacherous vice, than to expel it.
Farewel. Remember I have done my duty.
[*Goes out*]

Tul. [*alone*] This man diſcerns my heart—Well;
What of that?
Am I afraid its movements ſhould be ſeen?
I, whoſe clear thoughts have never ſhunn'd the light,
Muſt I now ſeek to hide them? O misfortune!
To have reduc'd myſelf to ſuch a ſtate,
So much beneath the greatneſs of my ſoul,
That, like a coward, I muſt learn to practiſe
The wretched arts of vile diſſimulation!
By heaven I will not do't———I will not ſtoop
To veil my diſcontent a moment longer.
But ſee! my rival comes, the happy Marcius.
His haughty mein, his very looks, affront me.

SCENE III.

CORIOLANUS, TULLUS.

Cor. Tullus, I have receiv'd intelligence,
That a ſtrong body of the Latin troops
Is in full march to raiſe the ſiege of Rome.
Another day will bring them to its aid.
But go thou forth, and lead the valiant bands,
By thee commanded, to repel theſe ſuccours.
Go,

Go, and cut off from Rome its laſt reſource.

Tul. I lead my troops from the great ſcene of action,
From falling Rome, which, ere to morrow's ſun
Shall ſet, may be our prey! ſure, you forget
My rank and ſtation—I diſdain the ſervice:
Give it to ſome you may command. For me,
I own no maſter but the Volſcian ſtates.
Rome is my object. I from Antium brought
The nobleſt army ever ſhook her walls.
And ſhall I now, on that deciſive day,
Doom'd by the gods to lay her pride in aſhes,
Shall I be abſent from the glorious work?
It is the higheſt outrage even to think it.——
Juſt gods! doſt thou preſume to give thy orders
To me? to me! thy equal in command?
Nay, thy ſuperior? was it not my hand,
My laviſh hand, beſtow'd thy power upon thee?
And know, proud Roman, that the man who gave it,
Can at his will reſume it.

Cor. I propos'd
This expedition to thee as thy friend
Not as thy general, Tullus. We are both
Commanders here; and for my ſhare of power,
Whene'er the council of the Volſcian ſtates,
Who cloth'd me with it, ſhall again demand it,
I at their feet will lay it down, unſounded,
The canker'd tongue of envy ſhall not own,
That by my ſervice I have well deſerv'd it.

Tul. Was it to them, or me, you hither came

To

To crave protection? Was not then your fortune,
Your liberty, your life, at my diſpoſal?
I rais'd you from the duſt, a wretched exile,
An outcaſt, helpleſs, friendleſs, driven to beg
The loweſt refuge which deſpair can ſeek,
Shelter amidſt thy foes. My pitying goodneſs
Protected, truſted, and believ'd you grateful.
O ill-plac'd confidence!—

Cor. Immortal gods!
Hear I theſe words from Tullus?

Tul. What for all this
Is thy return? pride; ſelf-ſufficiency;
Councils apart from mine; deſpotic orders;
The glory of the war all pilfer'd from me;
And to complete the whole, a Latin army
Now conjur'd up to draw me from the ſiege;
Till by cajoling our tame chiefs, and dazzling
The ſenſeleſs eyes of the low mob of ſoldiers,
Thou ſhalt be ſolely ſeated in the power
Which, thank my folly, now is ſhar'd betwixt us.

Cor. O indignation!—Down, thou ſwelling heart—
I will be calm—I will—Thou doſt accuſe me
Of the worſt vice that can debaſe mankind,
Of black ingratitude. On what foundations?
What have I done to merit ſuch a charge?
Is it my fault, if in the Volſcian army
My name is as revered and great as thine?
Can I forbid authority and fame,
To follow merit and ſucceſs?—You knew

The man whom you employ'd, and ſhould have known
He would not be a cypher in employment.
Tul. Think'ſt thou my heart can better brook than thine
To be that cypher! that diſhonour'd tool!
Subſervient to th' ambition of another?
Gods! I had rather live a drudging peaſant,
Unknown to glory, in ſome Alpine village;
Than at the head of theſe victorious legions,
Bear the high name of chief, without the power.
No, Marcius, no. I will command indeed:
And thou ſhalt learn, with all the Volſcian army,
To treat their general with reſpect.
Cor. Reſpect!
O Tullus! Tullus! by the powers divine!
I bore thee once reſpect, as high as man
Can ſhew to man. From thee, my foe, my rival,
I nor diſdain'd nor fear'd to aſk protection.
You gave me all I aſk'd, you gave me more,
With noble warmth of heart! which to eſteem,
Added to the ties of gratitude and friendſhip.
Whatever ſince, in council, or in arms,
Has been by me atchiev'd, was done for thee.
My glory all was thine. The palms I gain'd
Only compos'd a garland for his brow,
Who rais'd this baniſh'd man to tread on Rome.
Tul. To tread on him who rais'd him——That I know;
Is thy ambitious purpoſe: but be certain,
However

However Rome may bend beneath thy fortune,
Thou ſhalt not find an eaſy conqueſt here.

Cor. May Jove with lightning ſtrike me to the centre,
If from the day I ſaw thy face at Antium,
My heart has ever form'd one ſecret thought
To hurt thy honour, or depreſs thy greatneſs!
I was thy friend, thy ſoldier, and thy ſervant.
But now I will as openly avow,
Thy jealouſy has, with invenom'd breath,
Made ſuch a ſudden ravage in our friendſhip,
I know not what to think.——

Tul. Think me thy foe,
There is no laſting friendſhip with the proud.

Cor. Nor with the jealous—But of this enough.
Come, let us turn our fire a nobler way;
We have a worthier quarrel to purſue.——
It were unjuſt, diſhonourable, baſe,
Our pride ſhould hurt the Volſcian cauſe.

Tul. No, Marcius,
I mean to guard it better for the future;
The Volſcian cauſe is ſafeſt with a Volſcian.
I therefore claim, inſiſt upon my right,
That you ſhould yield me my command in turn.
The firſt attack was yours: 'tis ſcanty juſtice
The ſecond ſhould be mine.

Cor. Tullus, 'tis yours.
O it imports not which of us command!
Give me the loweſt rank among your troops;
All Italy will know the voice of fame.

Will tell all future times, that I was preſent;
That Coriolanus in the Volſcian army
Aſſiſted, when imperial Rome was ſack'd;
That city which, while he maintain'd her cauſe,
Invincible herſelf, made Antium tremble.

Tul. What arrogant preſumption!

SCENE IV.

To them VOLUSIUS, *entering haſtily.*

Tul. Ha! Voluſius,
Thy looks declare ſome meſſage of importance.

Vol. Tullus, they do—I was to find thee, Marcius,
To thee a ſecond deputation comes,
Thy mother, and thy wife, with a long train
Of all the nobleſt ladies Rome can boaſt,
In mourning habits clad, approach our camp,
Preceded by a herald, to demand
Another audience of thee.

Cor. How, Voluſius!
Said you the Roman ladies! Low, indeed,
Muſt be the ſtate of Rome, when thus her matrons
She ſends amidſt the tumults of a camp,
To beg protection for the men, who ly
Trembling behind their ramparts——come! once more!
And ſee me put an end to prayers and treaty!

SCENE

SCENE V.

TULLUS, VOLUSIUS.

Vol. Tullus, 'tis well. This anſwers to my wiſhes.
Tul. How! what is well? that humbled Rome once more
Shall deck him with the trophies of our arms?
Vol. And hop'ſt thou nothing from this bleſt event?
They who have often blaſted mighty heroes,
Who oft have ſtoln into the firmeſt hearts,
And melted them to folly; they my friend,
Will do what wiſdom never could effect.
Tul. Think'ſt thou the prayers and tears of wailing women
Can ſhake the man, who with ſuch cold diſdain
Stood firm againſt thoſe venerable conſuls,
And ſpurn'd the genius of his kneeling country?
Vol. It was his pride alone that made him ours.
That paſſion kept him firm; the flattering charm
Of humbling thoſe, who in their perſons bore,
The whole collected majeſty of Rome.
Theſe women are no proper objects for it:
He cannot triumph o'er his wife and mother.
On this my hopes are founded, that theſe women
May by their gentler influence ſubdue him.
Tul. Whate'er th' event, he ſhall no longer here,
As wave his paſſions, dictate peace or war.
Whether his [illegible]born ſoul maintains its firmneſs,

Or yields to female prayers, the Volſcian honour
Will be alike betray'd. If Rome prevails,
He ſtops our conquering arms from her deſtruction;
If he rejects her ſuit, he reigns our tyrant.
But, by th' immortal gods! his ſhort liv'd empire
Shall never ſee yon radiant ſun deſcend.

Vol. Bleſt be thoſe gods that have at laſt inſpir'd thee
With reſolution equal to thy cauſe,
The cauſe of liberty!——

Tul. Be ſure, Voluſius,
If that ſhould happen which thy hopes portend;
Should he, by nature tam'd, diſarm'd by love,
Reſpite the Roman doom—He ſeals his own;
By Heaven! he dies.

Vol. Let me embrace thee, Tullus!
Now breaking from the cloud, which, like the ſun,
Thy own too bounteous beams had drawn around thee.

Tul. You was deceiv'd, my friend. When I with tameneſs,
With tameneſs which aſtoniſh'd thy brave ſpirit,
Seem'd to ſubmit to that unequal ſway
He arrogated o'er me; know, my heart
Ne'er ſwell'd ſo high as in that cruel moment,
My indignation, like th' impriſon'd fire,
Pent in the troubled breaſt of glowing Ætna,
Burnt deep and ſilent: but, collected now,
It ſhall beneath its fury bury Marcius!
'Tis fixt. Our tyrant dies.

Vol. Tullus, my ſword
There claims to be employ'd.—Not mine alone—
There are ſome worthy Volſci ſtill remaining,

Who

Who think with us, and pine beneath the laurels
A Roman chief beſtows.

Tul. Go, find them ſtrait,
And bring them to the ſpace before his tent;
'Tis there he will receive this deputation.
Then if he ſinks beneath theſe womens prayers—
Or if he does not—But, Voluſius, wait,
I give thee ſtricteſt charge to wait my ſignal.
Perhaps I may find means to free the Volſci
Without his blood. If not—We will be free.

End of the Fourth Act.

ACT V. SCENE I.

Trumpets sounding.

The scene discovers the camp, a croud of Volscian *officers, with files of soldiers, drawn up as before. Enter* Coriolanus, Tullus, Galesus, Volusius. *The* Roman *ladies advance slowly from the depth of the stage, with* Veturia, *the mother of* Coriolanus, *and* Volumnia, *his wife, at their head, all clad in habits of mourning.* Coriolanus *stands at the head of the* Volsci, *surrounded by his lictors; but, when he perceives his mother and wife, after some struggle, he advances, and goes hastily to embrace them.*

CORIOLANUS, *advancing.*

LOWER your faces, lictors——
Oh Veturia!
Thou best of parents!
[illegible] Coriolanus, stop.
Whom am I to embrace? A son, or foe?
Say, [illegible] what [illegible] am I regarded here?
Thy mother, or thy captive?
[illegible] Justly, Madam,

You

You check my fondneſs, that, by nature hurry'd,
Forgot I was the general of the Volſci,
And you a deputy from hoſtile Rome.
[*He goes back to his former ſtation.*]
I hear you with reſpect. Speak your commiſſion.

Vet. Think not I come a deputy from Rome.
Rome, once rejected, ſcorns a ſecond ſuit.
You have already heard whate'er the tongue
Of eloquence can plead, whate'er the wiſdom
Of ſacred age, the dignity of ſenates,
And virtue can enforce. Behold me here,
Sent by the ſhades of your immortal fathers,
Sent by the genius of the Marcian line,
Commiſſion'd by my own maternal heart,
To try the ſoft, yet ſtronger powers of nature.
Thus authoriz'd, I aſk, nay, claim a peace,
On equal, fair, and honourable terms,
To thee, to Rome, and to the Volſcian people.
Grant it, my ſon! Thy mother begs it of thee,
Thy wife, the beſt, the kindeſt of her ſex,
And theſe illuſtrious matrons, who have ſooth'd
The gloomy hours thou haſt been abſent from us.
We, by whate'er is great and good in nature,
By every duty, by the gods, conjure thee!
To grant us peace, and turn on other foes
Thy arms, where thou may'ſt purchaſe virtuous glory.

Cor. I ſhould, Veturia, break the holy bonds
That hold the wide republic of mankind,
Society, to which I ſhould give
A wretch,

I ſhould, with my Volumnia's fair eſteem,
Forfeit her love; theſe matrons would deſpiſe me—
Could I betray the Volſcian cauſe, thus truſted,
Thus recommended to me—No, my mother,
You cannot, ſure you cannot aſk it of me!

Vet. And does my ſon ſo little know me? me!
Who took ſuch care to form his tender years,
Left to my conduct by his dying father?
Have I ſo ill deſerv'd that truſt? alas!
Am I ſo low in thy eſteem, that thou
Should'ſt e'er imagine I could urge a part
Which in the leaſt might ſtain the Marcian honour?
No, let me periſh rather! periſh all!
Life has no charms compar'd with ſpotleſs glory!
I only aſk, thou wouldſt forbid thy troops
To waſte our lands, and to aſſault yon city,
Till time be given for mild and righteous meaſures.
Grant us but one year's truce: mean-while thou may'ſt,
With honour and advantage to both nations,
Between us mediate a perpetual peace.

Cor. Alas! my mother! that were granting all.

Vet. Canſt thou refuſe me ſuch a juſt petition,
The firſt requeſt thy mother ever made thee?
Canſt thou to her intreaties, prayers, and tears,
Prefer a ſavage obſtinate revenge?
Have love and nature loſt all power within thee?

Cor. No,—in my heart they reign as ſtrong as ever.
Come, I conjure you, quit ungrateful Rome;
Come, and complete my happineſs in Latium.
You, and [illegible] Volumnia—[illegible] Veturia,

There

There ſhall you ſee with what reſpect the Volſci
Will treat the wife and mother of their general.

Vet. Treat me thyſelf with more reſpect, my ſon;
Nor dare to ſhock my ears with ſuch propoſals.
Shall I deſert my country, I who come
To plead her cauſe? Ah no!—A grave in Rome
Would better pleaſe me, than a throne at Antium.
How haſt thou thus forſaken all my precepts?
How haſt thou thus forgot thy love to Rome?
O Coriolanus, when with hoſtile arms,
With fire and ſword, you enter'd on our borders,
Did not the foſtering air, that breathes around us,
Allay thy guilty fury, and inſtil
A certain native ſweetneſs through thy ſoul?
Did not your heart thus murmur to itſelf?
" Theſe walls contain whatever can command
" Reſpect from virtue, or is dear to nature,
" The monuments of piety and valour,
" The ſculptur'd forms, the trophies of my fathers,
" My houſehold-gods, my mother, wife, and children!"

Cor. Ah! you ſeduce me with too tender views!
Theſe walls contain the moſt corrupt of men,
A baſe ſeditious herd; who trample order,
Diſtinction, juſtice, laws, beneath their feet,
Inſolent foes to worth, the foes of virtue!

Vet. Thou haſt not thence a right to lift thy hand
Againſt the whole community, which forms
Thy ever-ſacred country—that conſiſts
Not of [illegible] alone;

It knows no bounds; it has a retroſpect
To ages paſt; it looks on thoſe to come;
And graſps of all the general worth and virtue.
Suppoſe, my ſon, that I to thee had been
A harſh obdurate parent, even unjuſt:
How would the monſtrous thought with horror ſtrike thee,
Of plunging, from revenge, thy raging ſteel
Into her breaſt, who nurs'd thy infant years!——

Cor. Rome is no more! that Rome which nurs'd my youth;
That Rome, conducted by Patrician virtue,
She is no more! My ſword ſhall now chaſtiſe
Theſe ſons of pride and dirt! her upſtart tyrants!
Who have debas'd the nobleſt ſtate on earth
Into a ſordid democratic faction.
Why will my mother join her cauſe to theirs?

Vet. Forbid it, Jove! that I ſhould e'er diſtinguiſh
My intereſt from the general cauſe of Rome;
Or live to ſee a foreign hoſtile arm
Reform th' abuſes of our land of freedom. [*Pauſing.*]
But 'tis in vain, I find, to reaſon more.
Is there no way to reach thy filial heart,
Once fam'd as much for piety as courage?
Oft haſt thou juſtly triumph'd, Coriolanus;
Now yield one triumph to thy widow'd mother,
And ſend me back amidſt the loud acclaims,
The grateful tranſports of deliver'd Rome,
The happieſt ſa[illegible], the moſt renown'd of women!

Cor. Why, why, Volumnia, wilt thou plead in vain?

Tul. [*Aſide to* Voluſius] See, ſee, Voluſius, how
the ſtrong emotions
Of powerful nature ſhake his inmoſt ſoul!
See how they tear him.—If he long reſiſts them,
He is a god, or ſomething worſe than man.

Vet. O Marcius, Marcius! canſt thou treat me thus?
Canſt thou complain of Rome's ingratitude,
Yet be to me ſo cruelly ungrateful?
To me! who anxious rear'd thy youth to glory?
Whoſe only joy, theſe many years, has been
To boaſt that Coriolanus was my ſon?
And doſt thou then renounce me for thy mother?
Spurn me before theſe chiefs, before thoſe ſoldiers,
That weep thy ſtubborn cruelty? Art thou
The hardeſt man to me in this aſſembly?
Look at me! Speak!

[*Pauſing, during which he appears in great agitation.*]

Still doſt thou turn away?
Inexorable? ſilent?—Then, behold me,
Behold thy mother, at whoſe feet thou oft
Haſt kneel'd with fondneſs, kneeling now at thine,
Wetting thy ſtern tribunal with her tears.

Cor. [*Raiſes her.*] Veturia, riſe. I cannot ſee thee
thus.
It is a ſight uncomely, to behold
My mother at my feet, and that to urge
A ſuit, relentleſs honour muſt refuſe.

Vol. [*Shrinking.*] Since, Coriolanus, thou doſt ſtill
retain

In ſpite of all thy mother now has pleaded,
Thy dreadful purpoſe, ah! how much in vain
Were it for me to join my ſupplications!
The voice of thy Volumnia, once ſo pleaſing;
How ſhall it hope to touch the huſband's heart,
When proof againſt the tears of ſuch a parent?
I dare not urge what to thy mother thou
So firmly haſt deny'd——But I muſt weep——
Muſt weep, if not thy harſh ſeverity,
At leaſt thy ſituation. O permit me
[*Taking his hand.*]
To ſhed my guſhing tears upon thy hand!
To preſs it with the cordial lips of love!
And take my laſt farewel!

Cor. Yet, yet, my ſoul,
Be firm, and perſevere——

Vol. Ah Coriolanus!
Is then this hand, this hand to me devoted,
The pledge of nuptial love, that has ſo long
Protected, bleſs'd, and ſhelter'd us with kindneſs,
Now lifted up againſt us? Yet I love it,
And, with ſubmiſſive veneration, bow
Beneath th' affliction which it heaps upon us.
But O! what nobler tranſports would it give thee!
What joy beyond expreſſion! couldſt thou once
Surmount the furious ſtorm of fierce revenge,
And yield thee to the charms of love and mercy.
Oh make the glorious trial!

Cor. Mother! wiſe
Are all the powers [illegible] leaguing againſt me!

I cannot!—will not!—Leave me, my Volumnia!

Vol. Well, I obey—How bitter thus to part!
Upon ſuch terms to part! perhaps for ever!——
But tell me, ere I hence unroot my feet,
When to my lonely home I ſhall return,
What from their father, to our little ſlaves,
Unconſcious of the ſhame to which you doom them,
What ſhall I ſay? [*Pauſing: He highly agitated.*]
Nay, tell me, Coriolanus!

Cor. Tell thee! What ſhall I tell thee? See theſe tears!
Theſe tears will tell thee what exceeds the power
Of words to ſpeak, whate'er the ſon, the huſband,
And father, in one complicated pang,
Can feel—But leave me; even in pity leave me!
Ceaſe, ceaſe, to torture me, my dear Volumnia!
You only tear my heart; but cannot ſhake it:
For by th' immortal gods, the dread avengers
Of broken faith[illegible]——

Vol. [*Kneeling.*] Oh ſwear not, Coriolanus!
Oh vow not our deſtruction!

Vet. Daughter, riſe.
Let us no more [illegible] the Volſcian people
Expoſe [illegible] of ſhame.
It is in vain [illegible]
That to the best [illegible] nature [illegible]
Prefers the world—Hear me, [illegible] I have
A heart as ſtout as thine. I [illegible] hither
To be ſent back [illegible] baffled, ſham'd,

[illegible]teful

Hateful to Rome, becauſe I am thy mother:
A Roman matron knows, in ſuch extremes,
What part to take—And thus I came provided.
[*Drawing from under her robe a dagger.*]
Go! barbarous ſon! Go! double parricide!
Ruſh o'er my corſe to thy belov'd revenge!
Tread on the bleeding breaſt of her, to whom
Thou ow'ſt thy life!—Lo, thy firſt victim.
Cor. Ha! [*Seizing her hand.*]
What doſt thou mean?
Vet. To die, while Rome is free.
To ſeize the moment ere thou art her tyrant.
Cor. O uſe thy power more juſtly! Set not thus
My treacherous heart in arms againſt my reaſon.
Here! here! thy dagger will be well employ'd;
Strike here! and reconcile my fighting duties.
Vet. Off!—Set me free!—Think'ſt thou that graſp which binds
My feeble hand, can fetter too my will?
No, my proud ſon! thou canſt not make me live.
If Rome muſt fall! no power on earth can do it!
Cor. Pity me, generous Volſci!—You are men—
Muſt it then be?—Confuſion!—Do I yield?
What is it? Is it weakneſs? Is it virtue?—
Well——
Vet. What [illegible]
Cor. O no!——my ſtiled words refuſe
A paſſage to the throes that wring my heart.
Vet. Nay, if thou [illegible], yield like Coriolanus;
And [illegible]

Co-

Cor. [*Quitting her hand.*] There!—'Tis done!—
Thine is the triumph, nature!
[*To* Veturia *in a low tone of voice.*] Ah! Veturia!
Rome by thy aid is sav'd——but thy son lost.

Vet. He never can be lost, who saves his country.

Cor. [*Turning to the* Roman *ladies.*] Ye matrons, guardians of the Roman safety,
You to the senate may report this answer:
We grant the truce you ask. But on these terms:
That Rome, mean time, shall to a peace agree,
Fair, equal, just, and such as may secure
The safety, rights and honour of the Volsci.
[*To the troops.*]
Volsci, we raise the siege. Go, and prepare,
By the first dawn, for your return to Antium.
[*As the troops retire, and* Coriolanus *turns to the* Roman *ladies.*]

Tul. [*To* Volusius *aside.*] 'Tis as we wish'd, Volusius—To your station.
But mark me well—Till thou shalt hear my call,
I charge thee not to stir. One offer more
My honour bids me make to this proud man,
Before we strike the blow—If he rejects it,
His blood be on his head.

Vol. Well! I obey you. [*He goes out.*]

Cor. Be it thy care, Galesus, that a safeguard
Attend these noble matrons back to Rome.

SCENE II.

CORIOLANUS, TULLUS,

Cor. I plainly, Tullus, by your looks diſcern
You diſapprove my conduct.

Tul. Caius Marcius,
I mean not to aſſail thee with the clamour
Of loud reproaches, and the war of words;
But, pride apart, and all that can pervert
The light of ſteady reaſon, here to make
A candid fair propoſal.

Cor. Speak. I hear thee.

Tul. I need not tell thee, that I have perform'd
My utmoſt promiſe. Thou haſt been protected;
Haſt had thy ampleſt, moſt ambitious wiſh:
Thy wounded pride is heal'd, thy dear revenge
Completely ſated; and to crown thy fortune,
At the ſame time thy peace with Rome reſtor'd.
Thou art no more a Volſcian, but a Roman.
Return, return; thy duty calls upon thee
Still to protect the city thou haſt ſaved:
It ſtill may be in danger from our arms.

Cor. Inſolent man. Is this thy fair propoſal?

Tul. Be patient——Hear me ſpeak——I have already
From Rome protected thee; now from the Volſci,
From their juſt vengeance, I will ſtill protect thee.
Retire [illegible] where thou may'ſt with ſafety.

Cor. With ſafety [illegible]!——And think'ſt thou,

Will

Will ſtoop to thee for ſafety? No! my ſafeguard
Is in myſelf, a boſom void of blame,
And the great gods, protectors of the juſt.——
O 'tis an act of cowardice and baſeneſs,
To ſeize the very time my hands were fetter'd,
By the ſtrong chain of former obligations,
The ſafe ſure moment to inſult me!——Gods!
Were I now free, as on that day I was,
When at Corioli I tam'd thy pride,
This had not been.

Tul. Thou ſpeak'ſt the truth: it had not.
O for that time again! Propitious gods,
If you will bleſs me, grant it!—Know, for that,
For that dear purpoſe, I have now propos'd
Thou ſhould'ſt return. I pray thee, Marcius, do it!
And we ſhall meet again on nobler terms.

Cor. When to the Volſci I have clear'd my faith,
Doubt not I ſhall find means to meet thee nobly.
We then our generous quarrel may decide
In the bright front of ſome embattled field,
And not in private brawls, like fierce barbarians.

Tul. Thou canſt not hope acquittal from the Volſci.——

Cor. I do:—Nay more, expect their approbation,
Their thanks! I will obtain them ſuch a peace
As thou durſt never aſk; a perfect union
Of their whole nation with imperial Rome
In all her privileges, all her ſtate.
By the juſt gods, I will [illegible] would thou more?

Tul.

Tul. What would I more! proud Roman? This I would;
Fire the curſt foreſt where theſe Roman wolves
Haunt and infeſt their nobler neighbours round them;
Extirpate from the boſom of this land
A falſe perfidious people, who, beneath
The maſk of freedom, are a combination
Againſt the liberty of human kind,
The genuine ſeed of outlaws and of robbers.

Cor. The ſeed of gods!—'Tis not for thee, vain boaſter!
'Tis not for ſuch as thou, ſo often ſpar'd
By her victorious ſword, to talk of Rome,
But with reſpect and awful veneration.
Whate'er her blots, whate'er her giddy factions,
There is more virtue in one ſingle year
Of Roman ſtory, than your Volſcian annals
Can boaſt thro' all your creeping dark duration!

Tul. I thank thy rage. This full diſplays the traitor.

Cor. Ha! traitor!

Tul. Firſt, to thy own country, traitor!
And traitor, now, to mine!

Cor. Ye heavenly powers!
I ſhall break looſe—My rage—But let us part—
Leſt my raſh hand ſhould do a baſty deed
My cooler thought forbids.

Tul. Begone———Return———
To head the Roman troops? I grant thee quittance
Full and complete of all [illegible] obligations
Thou haſt [illegible]

Utter'd

Fetter'd thy hands. They now are free. I court
The worſt thy ſword can do; whilſt thou from me
Haſt nothing to expect, but ſure deſtruction.
Quit then this hoſtile camp. Once more I tell thee,
Thou art not here one ſingle hour in ſafety.

Cor. Think'ſt thou to fright me hence?

Tul. Thou wilt not then?
Thou wilt not take the ſafety which I offer?

Cor. Till I have clear'd my honour in your council,
And prov'd before them all, to thy confuſion,
The falſhood of thy charge; as ſoon in battle
I would before thee fly, and howl for mercy,
As quit the ſtation they have here aſſign'd me.

Tul. Voluſius! Hoa!

SCENE III.

To them VOLUSIUS, *and conſpirators, with their ſwords drawn.*

Tul. Seize and ſecure the traitor!

Cor. [*Laying his hand upon his ſword.*] Who dares approach me, dies!

Vol. Die thou!

[*As Coriolanus draws his ſword, Voluſius and the conſpirators ruſh upon him. Tullus ſtanding by, without*

Cor.

Cor. [*Endeavouring to free himself.*] Off!—Villains!
[*Falling*] O murdering ſlaves! Aſſaſſinating cowards!
[*Dies.*]

SCENE IV.

Upon the noiſe of the tumult, enter haſtily them Galeſus, the other deputies of the Volſcian ſtates, officers, friends of Coriolanus, and Titus, with a large band of ſoldiers.

Gal. [*As he enters*] Are we a nation rul'd by laws, or fury?
How! whence this tumult?—— [*Pauſing.*]
Gods! what do I ſee?
The noble Marcius ſlain!
Tul. You ſee a traitor
Puniſh'd as he deſerv'd, the Roman yoke
That thrall'd us broken, and the Volſci free!
Gal. Hear me, great Jove! Hear, all you injur'd powers
Of friendſhip, hoſpitality, and faith!
By that heroic blood, which from the ground
Reeking to you for vengeance cries, I ſwear
This impious breach of your eternal laws,
This daring outrage on the Volſcian honour,
Shall find in me a rigorous avenger!
On the ſame earth, polluted by their crime,
I will not live with the [illegible] ruffians!
Tul. [illegible] men.

These valiant men, were but my instruments,
To punish him who to our face betray'd us.
We shall not fear to answer to the Volsci,
In a full council of the states at Antium,
The g[illegible]us charge of having stabb'd their traitor!
Gal. [illegible]s, till then secure them.

[Tullus *and conspirators are led off.*]

[*Galesus st[illegible]ding over the body of Coriolanus, after a short pause, proceeds.*]

Volscian fathers,
And ye brave soldiers, see an awful scene,
Demanding serious solemn meditation.
This man was once the glory of his age.
Disinterested, just, with every virtue
Of civil life adorn'd, in arms unequal'd.
His only blot was this; that, much provok'd,
He rais'd his vengeful arm against his country.
And lo! the righteous gods have now chastis'd him,
Even by the hands of those for whom he fought.
Whatever private views and passions plead,
No cause can justify so black a deed:
These, when the angry tempest clouds the soul,
May darken reason, and her course controul;
But when the prospect clears, her startled eye
Must from the treacherous gulf with horror fly,
On whose wild wave, by stormy passions tost,
So many hapless wretches have been lost.
Then be this truth the star by which we steer,
Above ourselves our [illegible] *should be dear.*

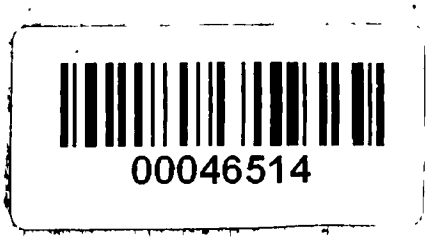
EPILOGUE.

Spoken by Mrs WOFFINGTON

WELL! Gentlemen! and are you ſtill ſo vain
To treat our ſex with arrogant diſdain;
And think, to you alone by partial Heaven
Superior ſenſe and ſovereign power are given;
When in the ſtory told to-night, you find,
With what a boundleſs ſway we rule the mind,
And by a few ſoft words of ours, with eaſe,
Can turn the proudeſt hearts juſt where we pleaſe?
If an old mother had ſuch powerful charms,
To ſtop a ſtubborn Roman's conquering arms,—
Soldiers and ſtateſmen of theſe days, with you,
What think you would a fair young miſtreſs do?
If with my grave diſcourſe and wrinkled face,
I thus could bring a hero to diſgrace,
How abſolutely may I hope to reign,
Now I am turn'd to my own ſhape again!
However, I will uſe my empire well;
And, if I have a certain magic ſpell,
Or in my to[illegible]
Which [illegible]

Be not alarm'd; I will not interfere
In ſtate-affairs, nor undertake to ſteer
The helm of government,—as we are told
Thoſe female politicians did of old:
Such dangerous heights I never wiſh'd to climb,—
Thank Heav'n I better can employ my time.—
Aſk you, then what my power I ſhall employ?
To make my ſubjects bleſt, is my reply.
My purpoſes are gracious all, and kind,
Some may be told—and ſome may be divin'd:
One, which at preſent I have moſt at heart,
To you without reſerve I muſt impart:
It is my ſovereign will—Hear and obey,—
That you with candor treat this Orphan Play.

END of the FOURTH VOLUME.


00046514

Digitized with financial assistance from the
Government of Maharashtra
on 15 June, 2016